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LIVES OF THE FATHERS

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LIVES OF THE FATHERS

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY IN BIOGRAPHY

BY

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1831-1903

'The History of the Church is represented in certain respects by the history of her great men.'—BISHOP WORDSWORTH, *Ch. Hist.* iv. 119.

VOLUME I

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TO

CHARLES LUCAS, Esq.

OF WARNHAM COURT,

TO WHOM THE WRITER IS INDEBTED FOR MANY

ACTS OF KINDNESS DURING MANY YEARS, AND

WHO FINDS HIS CHIEF HAPPINESS

IN PROMOTING THE HAPPINESS OF OTHERS,

I DEDICATE THESE PAGES

WITH GRATITUDE, AFFECTION, AND ESTEEM

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PREFACE

In the following volumes it is not my object to write a full and continuous history of the early Church. I aim rather at connecting the history of the Church during the first four centuries with the lives of her principal Fathers and Teachers.[1] The interest which attaches to the human and personal element of biography — which Carlyle called the most universally pleasant and profitable of all reading—is to a certain extent separable from the religious history, and yet is so closely connected with it that biography and history serve the purpose of mutual illustration. Any one who is familiar with the lives of the chief Church writers will scarcely be ignorant of any event of capital importance which occurred during the epoch in which they lived.

It is true that much has been written on this subject, and far better than I can write it. I might almost use

[1] The distinction between *Patres* and *Doctores Ecclesiae* was first recognised by Boniface VIII. in 1298. "The marks of a *Doctor Ecclesiae* are: 1. *Eminens eruditio;* 2. *Doctrina orthodoxa;* 3. *Sanctitas vitae;* 4. *Expressa ecclesiae declaratio*" (Schaff, *Hist. of the Church*, i. 631). The Doctors are, among the Greek writers, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, and John of Damascus; and of the Latin writers, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Hilary of Poictiers, with a few of the mediaeval schoolmen.

the modest language of an excellent French writer, and say, "All that I here write has been said elsewhere, has been said previously, has been said better." On the other hand, apart from histories of the Church or of Christianity, there have been but few attempts since the days of Cave to write consecutively the lives of the Fathers; and of these not many can be said to be generally current. In Germany, where much more has been published on the works of the Fathers than in England, Böhringer's *Die Alte Kirche* or *Kirchengeschichte in Biographieen* has nevertheless met with wide acceptance. I have read those interesting monographs, the plan of which is in some respects similar to that which I have adopted, though they give a larger space than I have done to questions of abstract theology. It is needless to add that I have constantly consulted the Greek and Latin ecclesiastical historians—Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Evagrius, Theodoret, Rufinus, Sulpicius Severus; Pagan historians and sophists like Ammianus Marcellinus, Zosimus, Libanius, Eunapius, and Julian; the ecclesiastical histories of Baronius, Tillemont, Döllinger, Heigenröther, De Broglie, and other Roman Catholic writers; the laboriously careful lives written by the Benedictine editors; the works of Schröckh, Cave, Neander, Gieseler, Bunsen, Baur, Milman, Newman, Neale, Mossman, Shepherd, Maurice, Wordsworth, Robertson, Donaldson, Renan, De Pressensé, and Schaff; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall;* Bingham's *Antiquities;* the writings of Bishop Kaye; Dorner, *On the Person of Christ;* Villemain, *Tableau de l'éloquence Chrétienne;* Hefele's *History of Councils;* Ueberweg's *History of*

Philosophy; Keim's *Rom. und das Christenthum;* the relevant articles in Herzog's *Encyclopaedia* and the English dictionaries of antiquities and Christian biography; and a great number of other works, to which reference will be made in each biography. Besides the material collected in these works, a great deal of invaluable original labour has been bestowed in the last twenty years on the lives and writings of individual Fathers; and I have thus been able to avail myself of the new light thrown on the early centuries of Christianity by many learned and valuable treatises. I have made use of works of first-rate importance, such as Bishop Lightfoot's *St. Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp;* Freppel and Kaye on Justin Martyr; the articles of Zahn and Lipsius on Irenaeus; Huet's *Origeniana* and Redepenning's *Origenes;* Hauck's *Tertullian;* Rettberg's *Cyprian;* Bishop Lightfoot's article on Eusebius; Bishop Reinkens's biographies of Hilary of Poictiers and Martin of Tours; Ullmann's *Gregory of Nazianzus;* the numerous recent works on St. Augustine; the lives of St. Jerome, by Amédée Thierry and Zöckler; Förster's *Ambrosius;* Fialon's *St. Basile;* Canon Bright's *Athanasius*, and Gwatkin's *Arians;* the lives of St. Chrysostom, by Amédée Thierry and Mr. Stephens; Mr. Swete's edition of *Theodore of Mopsuestia;* and various smaller treatises, like that of Rade on Damasus and Schepps on the recently-discovered remains of Priscillian.

My acknowledgments to these writers will be made, not only thus generally, but in numerous footnotes; and not to them only but to many others who have laboured

in the same fields. Yet the following pages are in no sense of the word a compilation. I am

"Nullius addictus jurare in verbo magistri;"

and I have repeatedly exercised my own judgment upon the original sources, which have always been in my hand or by my side as I wrote the Life of each of the Fathers.

There are two reasons, then, why I would hope that my labours will not prove to be superfluous in writing on subjects of an interest so inexhaustible. One is because, entirely apart from any work of my own, I may furnish some good results from books which are but little known to the general reader; the other because the kindness with which my previous writings have been received by multitudes in every region of the British Empire and in America, and the wide circulation which they have enjoyed in the chief European languages, encourages me in the humble hope that many may feel an interest in these pages to whom the subject of ecclesiastical history — important though it be — has been hitherto but little known. There are thousands of readers who will be glad to obtain a knowledge of the facts which are here recounted, but who, for various reasons, have hardly been reached by the existing Church histories or general biographies. It is with a view to their instruction that I have mainly written; while yet I would fain hope that others, who have already turned their attention to these subjects, may find some things in these pages which are not wholly unworthy of their attention. I wish these volumes to

be regarded as a continuation of those which I have already published on *The Life of Christ*, *The Life and Works of St. Paul*, and *The Early Days of Christianity*. They are all an illustration of that "Witness of History to Christ," of which I spoke in my Hulsean Lectures at Cambridge in 1870; and they also contribute incidentally to that "History of Interpretation" which formed the subject of my Bampton Lectures at Oxford in 1885.

And although the biographical method excludes the exhaustive chronicles of a history, and any minute discussions about chronology,[1] the reader will yet find in the following pages some reference to almost every leading personage—whether Jew, Pagan, or heretic—who materially influenced the fortunes of the Church during the first four centuries. In the Lives of Ambrose, Athanasius, Basil, and Chrysostom he will read much about the contemporary Emperors. The Bishops of Rome will come before his notice in the Lives of Hilary, Cyprian, and Jerome. From the Life of Tertullian he will learn something about Montanus and Marcion; from the Life of Athanasius about Arius; from the Life of Ambrose about Priscillian; from that of Gregory of Nyssa about Apollinaris; from that of Augustine about the Manichees, Donatists, and Pelagians. Something too he will learn about those Fathers and Teachers to whom, from want of space, no special

[1] Many dates of events in the first four centuries are disputed and uncertain. I have contented myself with silently considering the evidence, and following what seemed to me the most probable and well-supported conclusions.

biography is devoted, but who played a part in the events connected with the lives of their more prominent contemporaries.

The most eminent Fathers whose lives I have been compelled to omit, are Cyril of Jerusalem and Eusebius of Caesarea. The reader will find a truly admirable and exhaustive account of Eusebius by Bishop Lightfoot in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. The lives of Cyril of Alexandria and Theodore of Mopsuestia belong properly to a later epoch than those which I have here narrated, though Theodore died in 428.

To readers who have any seriousness I hope that the following pages will be found full of interest. They often dwell on questions which demand quiet and sustained attention, but they will also bring before us in detail the passions and occupations, the hopes and fears, of men in those early centuries. We shall see the scholar in his lecture-room, the recluse in his study, the monk in his cell, congregations in the crowded basilicas, Christian families in their happy homes, the bishop in his pulpit, the Emperor presiding over councils, heresiarchs troubling the peace of Churches, rival priests fiercely contending for episcopal thrones. We shall see Church synods swept by storms of factious turbulence while they discuss the nicest problems of theology. We shall see great metropolitans now successfully resisting the pride of autocrats, now defeated by the intrigues of women and eunuchs in the gorgeous palaces of Constantinople or Milan. We shall be present at the peaceful gatherings of noble ladies under the gilded roofs of patrician houses on Mount Aventine, and at

gatherings of poor hermits in the deserts of Egypt as they make their lauras resound with incessant psalms.

Again, we shall stand by the cradle of many superstitions which infected the pure faith of Christendom. We shall be forced to watch the painful deterioration of a clergy exalted into pride of power and forced into compulsory celibacy; to see the Pagan world profoundly alienated by the worship of spurious martyrs and their yet more spurious relics; to observe the strong stream of unconscious Manichean sentiment which surrounded virginity with ecstatic admiration and depreciated marriage as a miserable concession; to deplore the furious outbreaks of ignorant fanaticism among the monks of Asia or the Circumcellions of Africa. We shall see the encroachments of episcopal autocracy, and the reintroduction into Christianity of Jewish formalism and Jewish bondage.

In the course of our reading we shall be introduced into the precincts of many cities—to ROME, dominated by the ever-growing power of its Popes, yet still endeavouring to keep alive the dying embers of its Paganism even when Alaric began to thunder at its gates; to ANTIOCH, with its wit, its cynicism, its terrors, its tumults; to CONSTANTINOPLE, its voluptuous splendours, its incessant plots, its seething excitement, its abysmal corruption, its subtle discussions of the most recondite mysteries; to ATHENS, with its sophists and rhetoricians, and the fierce envies and boyish pranks of its university students; to ALEXANDRIA, with its catechetical school, its monks, its martyrs, its Neo-Platonists; to CARTHAGE, and its luxuries and temptations in those

last days, before it was irretrievably ruined by its Vandal conquerors; to CAESAREA IN PALESTINE, with its memories of the learned Eusebius and the saintly Origen; to CAESAREA IN CAPPADOCIA, with its bold Firmilian and its lordly Basil; to JERUSALEM, with its disorderly pilgrims and its debased and greedy population. And not to these capitals only, but also to little obscure places like NYSSA and NAZIANZUS, illuminated by the fame of the two great Gregories; to BETHLEHEM, with its thronged and harassed monasteries; to HIPPO, with its sailors and fishermen taught, reproved, comforted for forty years by the sermons and the example of the last and greatest of its humble bishops.

And how many remarkable characters will pass before us! We shall see something of the Emperors of those days both in the East and West; of the dazzling and ambiguous CONSTANTINE; the pompous and dogged CONSTANTIUS; the subtlety and superstition, the mingled magnanimity and meanness, of JULIAN; the forcible-feeble incapacity of VALENS; the charm of GRATIAN; the soldier-like fidelity and manliness of THEODOSIUS, the stupid and sullen dependence of his two sons.

And of the Fathers themselves we shall acquire a fuller knowledge, so that henceforth in the stately picture-gallery of great historic figures we shall familiarly recognise among many others the fervent IGNATIUS; the gentle and highly-gifted ORIGEN; the far-seeing, practical, undaunted ATHANASIUS; the sensitive, shrinking, contemplative GREGORY NAZIANZEN; the brilliant and passionate JEROME; the fiery and eloquent CHRYSOSTOM; AUGUSTINE, with his emotional and many-sided

genius; the strange personality of MARTIN; CYPRIAN and AMBROSE and BASIL, the types of great ecclesiastical rulers in their firm statesmanship and administrative abilities. If history be something more than a pageant —if it be, as Lord Bolingbroke said, "Philosophy teaching by examples"—if, as Carlyle said, "Great men are the inspired texts of that divine Book of Revelation of which a chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named History"—then there ought to be in the following pages much of interest and of instruction for many readers.

I have taken the best pains open to me, but I cannot hope to have escaped mistakes. To eliminate all possibility of errors and blemishes is hardly possible to any writer; it is certainly not possible to one who, like myself, can only devote to authorship the too brief periods of holiday and the scant interspaces of leisure which can alone be saved from the burden of heavy and pressing duties. I must leave it to greater and better men than myself to attain to inflexible accuracy in every particular, and to do their work "so perfitely as God made the world." The critic who eagerly searches for defects will find them abundantly. I can only hope that generous and unbiassed readers will find them compensated by some merits. This I can say with truth, that I have endeavoured always to be impartial, honest, just. I have endeavoured to look with generosity on the views of those from whom I cannot but differ, and I have tried to abstain from the hasty condemnation of any, whether the voice of posterity has been just to them or not. For the Fathers and

Teachers themselves I feel—as I have always felt—the deepest respect, fully sympathising with them in their difficulties and trials. I have acknowledged their greatness and their services to the cause of Christianity even when it was right to point out their necessary limitations. It would be impossible to say how much they have taught me, how much may be learned from their holy and noble example, and what comfort and strength I have derived in hours of trial from the spectacle of their sufferings and their constancy.

I commend what I have written to the candour and kindness of my readers, and I pray that God may so bless my efforts that they may not have wholly been in vain.

F. W. FARRAR.

Dean's Yard, Westminster,
January 12, 1889.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Roman Emperors

	A.D.
Trajan	98
Hadrian	117
Antoninus	138
M. Aurelius	161
Commodus	180
Pertinax	193
Didius	193
Niger	193
Severus	193
Caracalla	211
Geta	211
Maximus	217
Elagabalus	218
Alex. Severus	222
Maximin	235
Gordian	237
Philip	244
Decius	249
Gallus	251
Valerian	253
Gallienus	253
Claudius	268
Aurelian	270
Tacitus	275
Probus	276
Carus	282
Diocletian	284
Maximian	286

	A.D.
Constantius I.	305
Galerius	305
Constantine I.	306
Licinius	307
Maximin	308
Maxentius	309
Constantine II.	337
Constantius II.	337
Constans	337
Julian	361
Jovian	363
Valentinian I.	364
Valens	364
Gratian	367
Valentinian II.	375
Theodosius I.	379

Emperors of the West

Honorius	395
Valentinian III.	425
Maximus	455

Emperors of the East

Arcadius	395
Theodosius II.	408

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Bishops of Rome[1]

	Jaffé.	Gaius.
	A.D.	A.D.
St. Peter	*circ.*	
Linus	„ 67	79
Cletus	„ 79	91
Clement	„ 91	100
Evaristus	„ 100	109
Alexander I.	„ 109	119
Sixtus I.	„ 119	126
Telesphorus	„ 128	137
Hyginus	„ 139	142
Pius I.	„ 142	156
Anicetus	„ 157	167
Soter	„ 168	176
Eleutherus	„ 177	189
Victor I.	„ 190	202
Zephyrinus	202	217
Callistus	218	222
Urban I.	223	230
Pontian	230	235
Anterus	235	236
Fabian	236	250
Cornelius	251	253
[Novatian, 251]		
Lucius I.	252	255
Stephen I.	253	257
Sixtus II.	257	258
Dionysius	259	268
Felix I.	269	274
Eutychian	275	283
Caius	283	296
Marcellinus	296	304
[Four years' vacancy.]		
Marcellus	308	309
Eusebius	310	309
Melchiades	311	314
Sylvester I.	314	335
Mark	336	336
Julius I.	337	337
Liberius	352	352
[Felix II., 355-358]		
[Ursinus, 366-367]		
Damasus	366	366
Siricius	384	384
Anastasius I.	398	398
Innocent I.	402	401
Zosimus	417	417
Boniface I.	418	418

[1] These dates are given in Jaffé's *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum* (Berlin, 1851); and Gaius's *Series Episcoporum Eccl. Cathol.* (Ratisbon, 1873). Down to Victor I. the dates are quite uncertain, and even later are often disputed. See *infra*, ii. 707-714.

GENERAL CHRONOLOGY[1]

A. D.

c. 98. Accession of Trajan.
c. 100. Death of St. John the Evangelist.
c. 106. Martyrdom of Symeon, son of Clopas Bishop of Jerusalem.
c. 109. Sixtus I. Pope.
c. 112. Martyrdom of Ignatius.
Persecution of Christians in Bithynia. Pliny's letter to Trajan (*Ep.* x. 97).
117. Death of Trajan.
Succession of Hadrian.
c. 126. Apology of Quadratus.
Supposed Rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundarius.
c. 132. Apotheosis of Antinous.
c. 133. Apology of Aristides.
135. Suppression and death of Barcochba.
136. Jerusalem named Ælia Capitolina.
Return of Christians from Pella.
Marcus, first Gentile Bishop of Jerusalem.
138. Accession of Antoninus Pius.
c. 140. First Apology of Justin Martyr.
c. 142. *Shepherd of Hermas.*
Second Epistle of (Ps.) Clement.
c. 150. Birth of Tertullian.
c. 151. Polycarp visits Anicetus at Rome.
c. 155. Second Apology of Justin Martyr.
Birth of Clement of Alexandria.
Martyrdom of Polycarp.
c. 160. Beginning of Montanism.
Octavius of Minucius Felix.
Tatian's Address to the Greeks.
Heracleon's Commentary on St. John's Gospel.
161. Accession of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

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[1] In some cases, *where the date is uncertain*, the dates here given may not always correspond exactly with those in the text. To decide many of the dates with perfect accuracy is an impossible task.

A.D.

c. 162. Martyrdom of Felicitas and others.
c. 163. Martyrdom of Justin (?) and others.
c. 167. Lucian's *De Morte Peregrini.*
c. 173. Letters of Dionysius of Corinth.
c. 176. Apology of Claudius Apollinaris.
c. 177. Apology of Athenagoras.
177. Martyrdoms of Pothinus, Blandina, Ponticus, and others, at Lyons and Vienne, and of Symphorian at Autun.
180. Theophilus *ad Autolycon.*
Death of Marcus Aurelius.
The martyrs of Scillita.
Commodus, sole Emperor.
c. 185. Birth of Origen.
Conversion of Tertullian.
Irenaeus writes *Against Heresies.*
c. 186. Martyrdom of the Senator Apollonius.
c. 190. Clement succeeds Pantaenus in the Catechetical School of Alexandria.
193. Pertinax, Emperor, 1st January.
Didius Julianus, Emperor, 28th March.
Septimius Severus, Emperor, 13th April.
c. 200. Tertullian becomes a Montanist.
Birth of Cyprian.
202. Martyrdom of Perpetua, Felicitas, and others, at Carthage; of Leonides, father of Origen, Potamiaena, and others, at Alexandria.
c. 203. Origen succeeds Clement in the Catechetical School.
211. Caracalla and Geta, Emperors.
212. Assassination of Geta.
c. 213. Origen visits Rome.
c. 215. Origen driven from Alexandria.
217. Macrinus, Emperor.
219. Elagabalus at Rome.
222. Alexander Severus, Emperor.
c. 228. Origen ordained presbyter at Caesarea.
231. Origen leaves Alexandria.
235. Maximin, the first barbarian Emperor.
Origen retires to Cappadocia.
c. 237. Gregory Thaumaturgus pronounces his panegyric on Origen.
238. The Gordians, Emperors.
244. Philippus Arabs, Emperor.
245. Birth of Diocletian.
248. Philippus Arabs celebrates the millenary festival of Rome.
Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage.
249. Origen writes *Against Celsus.*
250. Decian persecution. Martyrdom of Fabian and others.
251. Gallus, Emperor.

A.D.

252. Exile and death of Cornelius, Bishop of Rome.
256. Novatian writes *De Trinitate.*
258. Martyrdom of Cyprian.
261. First edict of toleration by Gallienus.
c. 272. Porphyry writes *Against Christians.*
284. Diocletian, Emperor. The era of the martyrs.
297. Birth of Athanasius.
305. Abdication of Diocletian.
306. Beginning of Meletian schism in Egypt.
307. Constantine, Licinius, and Maximin Daza, Emperors.
309. Antony (?) founds monachism in Egypt.
311. Galerius's edict of toleration.
312. Defeat of Maxentius by Constantine at the Milvian Bridge, 28th October.
Edict of Milan, accords full toleration to Christianity.
Conversion of CONSTANTINE.
Defeat of Maxentius at Saxa Rubra.
313. Defeat of Maximin. Second edict of Milan.
314. Defeat of Licinius.
318. Arius in Egypt.
321. Excommunication of Arius.
323. Final defeat of Licinius.
325. Council of Nice.
Baptism of Gregory's father.
326. Deaths of Crispus and Fausta.
Athanasius, Bishop.
330. Birth of Gregory of Nazianzus.
Founding of Constantinople.
Death of Lactantius.
331. Birth of Julian.
336. Eusebian Council of Caesarea.
First exile of Athanasius.
Death of Arius.
337. Death of Constantine.
338. Death of Eusebius of Caesarea.
339. Athanasius at Rome.
340. Birth of Ambrose.
Death of Constantine II.
341. Consecration of Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths.
342. Death of Eusebius of Nicomedia.
343. Council of Sardica.
350. Death of Constans. CONSTANTIUS sole Emperor of East and West.
351. Council of Sirmium.
353. Birth of Augustine.
354. Execution of Gallus.
355. Gregory and Basil at Athens.

A.D.

355. The Council of Milan condemns Athanasius.
359. Councils of Rimini, Philippopolis, and Seleucia.
360. Basil and, shortly afterwards, Gregory leave Athens.
361. Death of Constantius. Accession of JULIAN.
Gregory ordained presbyter.
363. Defeat and death of Julian. Accession of JOVIAN.
364. Accession of VALENTINIAN I. in the West, VALENS in the East.
366. Damasus becomes Pope.
Final restoration of Athanasius.
367. Death of Hilary
370. Basil elected Bishop of Caesarea.
372. Meeting of Valens and Basil.
373. Death of Athanasius.
374. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan.
Death of Gregory the elder.
Council of Gangra.
375. Death of Valentinian I. Ascension of Gratian.
378. Battle of Adrianople. Death of Valens.
379. THEODOSIUS appointed Emperor by Valentinian II.
Suppression of Paganism in the East.
Gregory is called to Constantinople.
381. Meeting of the Council of Constantinople (Second General Council).
Gregory resigns his bishopric and returns to Arianzus.
383. Murder of Gratian. Ascension of Valentinian II.
384. Synod of Bordeaux.
385. First executions for heresy.
Jerome leaves Rome.
386. Conversion of Augustine.
Condemnation of the Priscillianists.
387. Death of Monnica.
Invasion of Maximus.
Chrysostom "on the Statues."
388. Defeat of Maximus by Theodosius.
389. Death of Gregory of Nazianzus.
391. Destruction of the Temple of Serapis.
392. Murder of Valentinian II. by Arbogast. The usurper Eugenius.
393. Council of Hippo on Donatism.
394. Battle of Aquileia.
Death of Maximus.
395. Death of Theodosius.
Augustine, Bishop of Hippo.
397. Death of Ambrose.
398. Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople.
Anastasius, Pope.
399. Death of Eutropius.
402. Alaric repelled from Verona by Stilicho.
Innocent, Pope.

A.D.

403. "Synod of the Oak."
404. Death of Eudoxia.
407. Death of Chrysostom.
408. Death of Arcadius.
410. Sack of Rome by Alaric.
Death of Alaric.
412. Edict of Honorius against the Donatists.
Theophilus succeeded at Alexandria by Cyril.
413. Murder of Count Marcellinus.
414. End of the schism of Antioch.
415. Pelagius acquitted by the Synods of Jerusalem and Diospolis.
Murder of Hypatia.
416. Councils of Carthage and Mileum against Pelagians.
Zosimus, Pope.
419. Boniface, Pope.
420. Death of Jerome.
422. Celestine, Pope.
423. Death of Honorius. Usurpation of John. Theodosius II. sole Emperor.
428. Count Boniface summons the Vandals into Africa.
Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople.
430. Death of Augustine.
431. Council of Ephesus (Third General). Condemnation of Nestorius.
451. Council of Chalcedon (Fourth General).
Defeat of Attila at Chalons.
455. Genseric at Rome.
496. Conversion of Clovis.

LIVES OF THE FATHERS

INTRODUCTORY

IGNATIUS is the earliest of the Apostolic Fathers of whom we can offer anything which approaches to a biography.[1] We have, indeed, a few writings of Christian teachers, of which one or two may date back to the lifetime of St. John, but of their authors we know little or nothing. The *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, which was published by Bishop Bryennios in 1883, and which has thrown so strange and interesting a light over the simple organisation, faith, and worship of the early communities of Christians, comes to us from an unknown source. The *Epistle of Clement* to the Corinthians was written about A.D. 95, by the Clement who was an early Bishop of Rome.[2] But of Clement, who does not mention himself by name, we can learn nothing. It is a matter of the merest con-

[1] The best editions of the works of the *Apostolic Fathers* are those of Cotelerius (Par. 1672), Jacobson (4th ed. 1863), Hefele (4th ed. 1855), Dressel (2d ed. 1863); but these are to some extent superseded by those of Gebhardt, Harnack, and Zahn (1877), Henck (1881), and Lightfoot (1869, 1877, 1885). They are translated by Archbishop Wake (Lond. 1693, 4th ed. 1737); Roberts and Donaldson, in Clark's Ante-Nicene Library (Edinb. 1867); and by Hoole (Lond. 1872).

[2] Linus, Anencletus, Clement (Euseb. Jer.); the names occur in this order in early liturgies. See Lightfoot, *Ep. of Clem.* p. 5.

jecture whether he was the Philippian Clement mentioned by St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3),[1] or a member of the household of Flavius Clemens, the Christian consular, who was a cousin of the Emperor Domitian.[2] The account of his supposed martyrdom is no earlier than the ninth century, and the various writings ascribed to him under the general name "Clementines" are acknowledged forgeries. The *Epistle of Barnabas*, with its unsound opinions and artificial methods of interpreting the Old Testament, may have been the work of some one of that name, but it is inconceivable that such a treatise could have been written by the "Son of Consolation," the companion of St. Paul. The *Shepherd of Hermas* is a book of visions and similitudes, inferior to those of the fourth book of *Esdras*, which, though it has great historic interest, possesses but little artistic merit, and propounds some dubious theological opinions. But its genial and child-like writer has left no record of his life. It is possible that even the name Hermas, as well as the personal circumstances alluded to in the book, are fictitious; and in spite of the unwonted popularity of *The Shepherd*, which was the Pilgrim's Progress of early Christianity, and was sometimes even placed on a level with Scripture,[3] we do not know whether the professed author was the brother of Pius, Bishop of Rome, or was the Hermas mentioned by St. Paul. Of Papias again our personal knowledge is slight. We learn from Irenaeus that he was "a companion of Polycarp and a hearer

[1] Orig. *in Joann.* i. 29.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 15; see Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 22. That Clement was either the nephew (De Rossi) or the son (Ewald) of the imperial consular is unlikely.

[3] As even by Irenaeus, *Haer.* iv. 3. But Tertullian spoke scornfully of its gentleness, *De Pudic.* 10. The theology of Hermas is sometimes peculiar. See Gieseler, i. sect. 36.

of John," which surely can only mean John the Apostle.[1] Eusebius tells us that he was a bishop of Hierapolis, and that his extant fragments were part of a work in five books called *An Exposition of the Lord's Sayings*. He was, like others of his day, a believer in the crude doctrine of a literal millennium. We see from what remains of his writings that he was, as Eusebius said, "a man of very moderate intellect,"[2] as well as of extreme credulity. The *Sententiæ*, ascribed by some writers to Sixtus or Xystus I., Bishop of Rome in the reign of Hadrian, are assigned by recent writers to Q. Sextus, a stoic philosopher.[3]

The writings of these sub-Apostolic authors, though they are not works of genius, and possess no great intrinsic or literary value, are of the utmost importance for the early history of Christian doctrine, life, and organisation. They are characterised by a glowing faith and a noble moral tone, and largely consist of direct exhortation and simple statements of doctrine.[4] The examination of them, either from the critical or theological standpoint, does not fall within the scope of the following pages, in which I only purpose to narrate the lives, and to touch on the opinions of those early fathers and teachers respecting whom we have fuller information.

[1] Iren. *Haer.* v. 33 ; Euseb. *Chron. ad Olymp.* 220. I have elsewhere given my reasons for entirely disbelieving Eusebius's suggestions that "John the Elder" was a different person from John the Apostle. See *Expositor.* 2d series, ii. 321 *segg.*

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* iii. 39, *σφόδρα . . . σμικρὸς ὢν τὸν νοῦν.* A little before (if the reading be genuine, he calls him *ἀνὴρ τὰ πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα λογιώτατος.*

[3] *Γνῶμαι Σέξτου.* They are 430 in number. Ewald assigns them to Pope Xystus I. (*Gesch. Isr.* vii. 322,; herein he follows Rufinus. But Jerome calls the writer "a Christless and most heathenish Pythagorean."

[4] The Epistles of Barnabas, Clement, and Polycarp, and the *Pastor* of Hermas, were read in many churches in public worship, and were regarded as inspired (Euseb. *H. E.* iii. 16, iv. 23 ; Iren. iv. 3 ; Orig. *ad Rom.* X. c. 31).

Yet before leaving the works of these ancient Christian writers, we should observe that if they cause us some disappointment, such a feeling can only be due to the mistaken anticipations which their works serve to correct. The history of Christianity would undoubtedly have been very different if we had constructed it *à priori*; but "things are as they are," and the history is none the less a revelation of God's dealings with the world, although it follows lines entirely unlike those which we should have expected. We are disappointed—but unreasonably so—to find that so much of Clement's Epistle is a mosaic of second-hand phrases; that his quotations are often loose; that he adduces as Scripture passages which are not to be found in the Scriptures;[1] that he seriously appeals to the Phœnix as an emblem of the Resurrection; that he draws unauthorised arguments from misquoted texts, as when he alters Is. lx. 17 into, "I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith;"[2] and that he seriously supposes the red cord let out of Rahab's window to have been a prophecy of the blood of Christ.[3] But on the other hand, let us notice that (1) we are thus furnished with an additional measure of the immense superiority of the writings of the Apostles in their originality, power, and wisdom; that (2) Clement shews himself in no respect more credulous than Herodotus, Pliny, Tacitus, and other writers of the highest rank in classical literature; and that (3) the humble Christians of those days were neither trained in the principles of criticism, nor did they write with books always at hand. Further, we must not forget that Clement furnishes us with most interesting glimpses of facts which would have been

[1] Clem. Rom. *Ep.* 17, "I am but as the smoke of a pit."
[2] Id. 42. [3] Id. 12.

otherwise unknown to us, as when he tells us that St. Paul had been seven times imprisoned; that he suffered martyrdom "under the praefects," perhaps under Tigellinus and Sabinus in the last year of Nero; and that the female martyrs of the Christians had to appear as Danaids and Dirces on the stage of Rome. But far more than this, let us bear in mind that in its purity of moral tone and depth of spiritual intuition, the humble epistle of this early Christian stands immeasurably above the finest productions of Greek and Roman genius. "How blessed and wonderful, beloved, are the gifts of God! Life in immortality, splendour in righteousness, truth in confidence, faith in assurance, self-control in holiness. And all these fall under the cognisance of our understandings now; what then shall those things be which are prepared for such as wait for him?" Where even in Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius could there be found such a sentence as that?[1]

Again, when we turn to the Epistle of Barnabas, we are offended by its curious self-satisfaction in a most weak and untenable form of "gnosis," as exhibited in crude and almost grotesque allegorising of simple Scriptural passages by Rabbinic and Philonian methods,[2] both equally baseless. We find in the Epistle the strange heresy that Moses had spoken everything "spiritually," *i.e.* allegorically, and that the whole system of ceremonial Judaism rose out of a carnal misconception into which the multitude had been misled

[1] The pseudo-Clementine forgeries show how a later and more corrupted Christianity would have *desired* Clement to write. It does not enter into my present scope to speak of these, or of the so-called Apostolical Constitutions.

[2] For instance the writer misquotes the story of Abraham's 318 servants, and makes it a prophecy of the crucifixion (ΤΙΗ″ = 318 is made to represent the Cross and the name of Jesus). (See the writer's *Hist. of Interpretation*, p. 168.)

by an evil spirit—a view which is also traceable in the pseudo-Clementines. But the Epistle is the work of an unknown writer; and the conversion to Christianity did not involve the instant apprehension of all truth. The object which the writer had in view—the protection of the Church from Judaic leanings—was most wise; and in the closing chapters we have that plain moral instruction which was invaluable to the early converts. The Epistle of Clement is appended to the Alexandrian manuscript, the Epistle of Barnabas to the Sinaitic. The chasm of difference between the canonical books and those which were placed almost on the same level in the early Church, still remains; yet even these inferior writings have a worth of their own, while they serve to illustrate the truth that the spread of Christianity was "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Again, when we read in Papias the crude chiliastic passage about the vine whose clusters should cry out, "Take me, I am a better cluster, and bless the Lord through me;" and still more when we find that the source of a saying which he attributes to our Lord was really a Jewish *apocryphon*, we are naturally vexed. Yet how valuable is the testimony of Papias to the Gospels, and how full of interest are the other fragments of his *Expositions!*

Once more, who can resist the simple charm of Hermas? To set him down, as Mosheim does, for either a fanatic or a deceiver, and his book, as Bunsen does, for "a well-meant but silly romance," is surely most harsh. He shows every mark of a simple-minded and honest man, who in a time when the Church was losing her first innocent faithfulness, sincerely believed that he had a revelation to deliver. He was a layman, with an

imperfect knowledge of theology; he never quotes from Scripture, but only from the apocryphal prophecy of Eldad and Modad;[1] his literary skill is as rude as the pictorial skill of the early painters of the catacombs. But, on the other hand, some of his similitudes—that for instance on Fasting, and that about full and empty jars, and that of the merry sheep[2]—have much simple beauty of their own. His eschatology is refreshingly free from the hopeless horror and even brutal savagery of some later writers; he sees and rightly insists upon the transcendent importance of righteousness and holiness. So far from joining Niebuhr in pitying the Christian who had to hear such a book read in Church, we may feel sure that moral instruction so pure would have fallen like the dew of heaven on souls familiar with the "putrid stains" which deface the pages of the contemporary Pagan literature.

And no one will be disappointed with the *Epistle to Diognetus*. It is precious, not for its eloquence only, but also for its freedom from puerilities and superstition. The writer's method is orderly, his argument logical. After proving the vanity of idols, and the emptiness of Judaic ceremonialism, he shows that Christianity is but a new form of life in the midst of the old life. "Christians pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are put to death and restored to life. They are evil spoken of and yet are justified. To sum up all in one word, What the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world."[3] He dwells on the infinite love manifested in the Incarnation of Christ; he shows the miserable state of the world before His

[1] Vis. ii. 3. [2] Sim. 5, 6, etc. [3] *Ep. ad Diogn.* 5, 6.

coming; and then sets forth the truth that all the best blessings flow from the imitation of God. Christianity in such a form as he advocated could not but have made a deep impression on the minds of all thinking men.

An additional element of value and interest in the works of the Apostolic Fathers arises from the unsuspected and casual form of their writings. They were not formal treatises, but accidental letters. They enable us to see the teachers of the generation which succeeded the Apostles exactly as they were in ordinary life. Clement writes to restore peace to a church troubled by dissensions. Ignatius utters a few simple farewell exhortations to churches which had shown their interest in his approaching martyrdom. Polycarp, answering a letter from another church, gives at the same time a few words of advice. They differ widely in character. Clement is serene and gentle; Ignatius, fiery and impassioned; Polycarp, simple and firm: and they write with different aims—the first to merge into unity the varying elements of Apostolic teaching; the second to insist on the need of organisation; the third to show the need for constant faithfulness. Yet all three are orthodox and moderate—free alike from the anti-Judaic spirit of Barnabas and from the Judaising proclivities of Hermas and Papias. From the combination of these writings we derive a varied insight into the attainments and tendencies of the early Christians.

The scantiness or entire absence of biographical details will also prevent me from doing more than allude to some of the apologists of the second century. The gloomy and passionate TATIAN was an Assyrian rhetorician, who was converted to Christianity in middle life, having been first attracted to its tenets

by disgust for the cruel superstitions of Paganism. He afterwards lapsed into the ascetic heresies of the Encratites, and seems to have been led astray by a vain and restless disposition. He wrote, among other works which have perished, two of very different value. One was an unfair, bitter, and violent *Discourse against the Greeks;* the other was a *Diatessaron* or Harmony of the Gospels, in which it is now nearly certain that he made use of the Gospel of St. John.[1] It had the merit of being the earliest attempt to place in chronological order the events of the Life of Christ as narrated by the four Evangelists. THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH was the author of three books in defence of Christianity addressed to Autolycus. The Athenian philosopher, ATHENAGORAS, wrote an Apology or "Embassy" to Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus, and L. Aur. Commodus; and a treatise on the Resurrection. HERMIAS wrote a severe but able satire on heathen philosophers. The Jewish Christian HEGESIPPUS, the gentle DIONYSIUS OF CORINTH, MELITO OF SARDIS, APOLLINARIS OF HIERAPOLIS, and others who lived in the second century, are only known to us by fragments of their writings.[2]

On the other hand, we know sufficient of Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus to enable us to set forth their personality; and in reading the story of their lives we shall learn something of the history of

[1] To deal with Tatian's *Diatessaron* and his other writings would require a volume. The English reader may consult Lightfoot, *Contemp. Review*, May 1827; Wace, *Expositor*, 1882; Prof. Fuller in the *Dict. of Christ. Biography*.

[2] The Apologies of the pious and learned *Quadratus* (A.D. 126), and of the philosopher *Aristides*, afterwards Bishop of Athens (Jer. *De Vir. ill.* 20), have not been preserved. They are said to have evoked the moderate rescript of Hadrian to Minuc. Fundanus (Justin *Apol.* i. 68; Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 8, 9). The reader will find a trustworthy account of the works here referred to in Donaldson's *Crit. Hist. of Christ. Lit. and Doctrine*, vol. iii.

the Church in the second century, and of the tone of opinion which then prevailed.

Of the condition of the primitive Church we may also learn something from other and more incidental sources. Let the student read the beautiful and pathetic letter in which the Churches of Lyons and Vienne describe the brave endurance of aged men, and slave girls, and young boys; or the Acts of the martyrdom of Felicitas and Perpetua at Carthage, of Potamiaena and Basilides at Alexandria, and he will see how invincible was the fortitude, how absolute the conviction, which Christianity inspired. Again let him read the simple epitaph of ABERCIUS, Bishop of Hieropolis—(not as was supposed of Hierapolis, and not therefore a successor of Papias)—whose tomb was discovered by Mr. W. M. Ramsay in 1882.[1]

The epitaph, which is written in rude Greek hexameters, runs as follows:—

"*I, the citizen of a chosen city, made this in my life-time, that in due season I may have a resting-place for my body. Abercius by name, I am a disciple of the pure shepherd who feeds his herds of sheep on the mountains and plains, who has great eyes that look on all sides; for He taught me faithful writings, who sent me to royal Rome to see it, and to see a golden-robed, golden-sandalled Queen, and there too I saw a people that has the bright seal. And I saw the plain of Syria and all the cities, even Nisibis, crossing the Euphrates. And everywhere I had companions. With Paul, I followed, and Faith led me everywhere, and everywhere served up to me for food a Fish from the fountain,*[2]

[1] W. B. Ramsay, *Trois Villes Phrygiennes.* Bull. de Corresp. Hellénique Juillet, 1882. *Journ. of Hellenic Studies,* 1882 and 1883. Lightfoot's *Ignatius,* i. 478-489.

[2] The Fish (ΙΧΘΥΣ = Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ) was the

very large, pure, which a pure Virgin grasped; and she (Faith) gave this to friends to eat continually, having excellent wine, giving the mixed wine with bread. These words, standing by, I Abercius bade to be thus inscribed. I was truly living my seventy-second year. Let every fellow-Christian who reads this pray for me."

It is needless to add the three lines in which the old Christian bishop forbids any one on pain of heavy mulct, to tamper with his tomb; but the inscription, which belongs to the close of the second century, is on many grounds supremely interesting and instructive. It is the earliest Christian inscription *of any length* which we possess, and it became the starting-point for a fantastic legend. Abercius, says the story, visited Rome, and exorcised a demon from Lucilla, daughter of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and Faustina, bidding the demon take up an altar and convey it to Hierapolis,[1] which altar was the one placed upon his tomb. Of this altar-tomb Mr. Ramsay has discovered a fragment. Of Abercius, little is known. Bishop Lightfoot conjectures that the old Bishop of Hieropolis is identical with the Abercius Marcellus who is referred to in Eusebius as a strong opponent of the Montanists.[2] The interest of the inscription lies for us in the glimpse which it gives us into the thoughts of the early Christians. The chosen city, of which the old bishop claims to be a citizen, is probably the city of God.[3] Suppressing all mention of his works or dignity, he speaks only of that which

early cryptogram for Christ. The fish, as in the gospels, is also often used as the emblem of the believer as well as of Christ (Tert. *De Bapt.* 1 "Nos. pisciculi secundum Ἰχθὺν nostrum in aqua nascimur." Jer. *Ep.* 43 "Bonosus, tanquam ἰχθύος filius, aquosa petit)."

[1] Confused in the legend with the obscure Hieropolis.

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* v. 16. See *infra*, *The Life of Tertullian*, § ii. p. 179.

[3] Comp. Phil. iii. 20. "Our citizenship (πολίτευμα) is in Heaven."

concerns his faith, and this he does in that allusive and almost cryptographic style which was rendered necessary by an age of persecution. The Pure Shepherd is He who was ever present to the minds of the early converts, and perhaps, as Bishop Lightfoot supposes, Abercius may have seen in the catacombs one of the representations of this symbol of the Lord Jesus as the beautiful shepherd, watching with great eyes of love His feeding sheep. The "faithful letters" are the writings of the New Testament.[1] The golden-robed, golden-slippered Queen is not, as the legend supposed, the Empress Faustina, nor is the "golden seal" the mere ring of the Roman senator. Abercius could have cared nothing for such mundane trivialities as these. The Queen is the faithful Church of the Romans, and the seal the ideal brightness of their baptism. The mention of the Bishop's travels is only inserted to show how wide was the diffusion of Christianity in all lands which he had visited, with the writings of St. Paul as his teachers, and with Faith as his guide. Faith served up to him the spiritual food of the mystic Fish, that is the body of Christ spiritually received into the heart of the believer in the supper of the Lord, and grasped by the Church, a pure Virgin, from the fountain of Baptism. The wine is at once excellent, and is the spiritual blood (*i.e.* the outpoured life) of Christ; and here we have probably another instance of the familiar play on the identical pronunciation of *chrestos* (excellent) and

[1] It is remarkable that in the inscription (which we can reproduce from the legendary life of Abercius in Symeon Metaphrastes) the word "Paul" is designedly obliterated. Mr. Ramsay thought that this was done as a protest against the Paulician heretics in the seventh century; but Bishop Lightfoot thinks that it may have been done from the supposition that Paul of Samosata was intended; or as a protest against the Marcionites who relied too exclusively on St. Paul.

Christos (Christ).[1] It is a mingled cup, wine and water, as was customary in the early Church, and generally with the wines of antiquity.

In this very ancient and undoubtedly genuine inscription we have, then, a most remarkable evidence of the growth of Christianity, the authenticity of the New Testament writings, the preciousness of the two sacraments, the love, the faith, and the simplicity of the Christians of the second century. The epitaph in all its features shows the same characteristics as the inscriptions in the catacombs, which furnish us with some of our most precious *data* for estimating the spirit of the early Christians.

The CATACOMBS are vast subterranean excavations which would perhaps extend for some 400 miles if placed in a continuous line. They are hewn out of the granular tufa which forms a large part of the soil of Rome, and sometimes three, four, and even five galleries run one above the other. The *fossores* ("sextons") employed in these excavations were regarded as the lowest order of the Christian clergy, and in the catacombs they are sometimes represented with their lamp and pick, and other implements, which the archæologists at first mistook for instruments of torture. The catacombs are not, as has been at various times conjectured, the *puticoli* in which the bodies of the lowest slaves were flung to rot; nor the *arenariae* ("sand-pits") in one of which Nero was urged to hide himself before his shameful suicide; nor places either of refuge or of worship, though they were sometimes used for both purposes. Nor were they *mixed* places of burial for Pagans and Christians, though the Christians sometimes used Pagan symbols, and even perhaps borrowed some

[1] Just. *Apol.* i. 67.

disused Pagan tombstones. Nor were they *secret* places of burial, for no such gigantic substructions could possibly have been made without the cognisance and permission of the Imperial police. The Christians at Rome—mainly a foreign and Greek-speaking community—preferred to *bury* their dead as did the Jews, and not to *burn* them as did the Pagans. The earliest known inscription in the catacombs is A.D. 72; the latest is A.D. 410. The bodies were largely taken from them by Pope Paul I. in A.D. 751, to save them from the relic-stealing propensities of Astaulph, King of the Goths; and afterwards in the thirteenth century by Pope Honorius III. (1227). After this they fell into oblivion, and were only accidentally rediscovered by some labourers in a vineyard in 1578, when Rome was "amazed to find another Rome buried beneath her soil." How different was that subterranean Rome from the guilty city of the Seven Hills, whose life had once throbbed above those quiet resting-places of the dead! How terrible was the contrast between the life of Paganism revealed by the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the life of the early Christians as revealed by the vast cemeteries where their dust sleeps till the resurrection day!

The *columbaria*, which enshrined the urns and ashes of the Pagans, were family burial-places; but as the great and deep idea of the community of the faithful came through the Christian religion, so these cemeteries were devoted indiscriminately to the final resting-place of all alike.[1] They were a visible witness to the sacredness which Christianity attached to the mortal body, and also to the all-embracing unity of brotherhood in the great family of God. In their absolute simplicity, and the oblivion to which they consign the differences

[1] Mommsen.

of human rank, they show how completely the Christians had learnt the spirit of their Lord's words—"My kingdom is not of this world."

We learn much about the hopes, the faith, the charity, the practices of the early Church from thus looking at the rock whence we were hewn and the hole of the pit whence we were digged.

The catacombs—which have now been thoroughly explored by the labours of Bosio, Aringhi, De Rossi, and others—teach us in three ways: by their symbols, their inscriptions, and their frescoes.

(i.) Their *symbols* are the same as those mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, as used by Christians on their signet-rings, such as the dove, the ship or ark, the anchor, the palm, the fish. They used also the monogram of Christ; the letter P which stood for "help;"[1] the hart "panting after the water-brooks;" the olive branch; the ever-green leaf; the palm of victory; the harp of joyous melody; the cock, the emblem of watchfulness; the peacock and phœnix, emblems of the resurrection. The commonest symbols, however, were the vine and the sheep. The vine was meant to indicate the joyous festive innocence of their new life. The sheep was the natural emblem of the disciple. The goat is often used as well as the sheep, and the Good Shepherd often bears a kid, not a lamb, upon His shoulders. This was perhaps a protest against the hard sentence of narrow sects like the Montanists

[1] Because $\beta o \acute{\eta} \theta \epsilon \iota \alpha = 100$, which is the numerical value of the letters $\beta o \acute{\eta} \theta \epsilon \iota \alpha$, by what the Talmudists call *Gematria*. See my *History of Interpretation* (Bampton Lectures for 1885), pp. 98-100. If it be necessary to apologise for a very occasional reference to my own previous writings, I may here say, once for all, (1) that such is the practice of all writers alike; and (2) it is only done with the view of not repeating what I have said elsewhere.

and Novatians who denied to the Church any power to absolve from mortal post-baptismal sins.

"'He saves the sheep; the goats He doth not save.'

. . . . . .

So spake the fierce Tertullian; but she sighed,
The infant Church! Of love she felt the tide
Strèam on her from her Lord's yet recent grave.
And then she smiled; and, in the catacombs,
With eye suffused but heart inspirèd true,
On those walls subterranean, where she hid
Her head mid ignominy, death, and tombs,
She her Good Shepherd's hasty image drew
And on His shoulder, not a lamb but kid."[1]

(ii.) The symbols of the catacombs, like every other indication of early teaching, show the glad, bright, loving character of the Christian faith. It was a religion of joy and not of gloom, of life and not of death, of tenderness not of severity. Blooming flowers and purple grapes, and bright children, and garlands of roses, and green leaves, seemed the natural adornment of the tomb. We see in them, as in the Acts of the Apostles, that the keynotes of the music of Christian life were "exultation" (ἀγαλλίασις) and "simplicity" (ἀφελότης).[2] And how far superior in beauty and significance were these early Christian symbols to the meaningless and Pagan broken columns, and broken rosebuds, and skulls, and weeping women, and inverted torches of our cemeteries! We find in the catacombs "neither the cross of the fifth and sixth centuries, nor the crucifixions and crucifixes of the twelfth, nor the tortures and martyrdoms of the seventeenth, nor the skeletons of the fifteenth, nor the cypresses and death's-heads of the eighteenth." We

[1] Matthew Arnold. [2] Acts ii. 46.

find, instead of these, the symbols of beauty, hope, and peace.[1]

(iii.) We see the same characteristics in the *Inscriptions*. They are very short and very simple, unlike the tedious modern enumerations of forgotten titles, and immaterial distinctions, and pompously-eulogised virtues. They breathe an universal charity and an universal peace.

"*Fructuosus, thy soul is with the just.*"
"*Constantia, ever faithful, went to God.*"
"*Eternal peace be to thee, Timothea, in Christ.*"
"*The sleeping-place of Elpis.*"
"*Agape, thou shalt live for ever.*"

The inscription "*In peace*" is reiterated with a touching monotony. What epitaph could be more sublime in the careless unconscious audacity of its defiance of death than the two words of the inscription, "Terentianus *lives*"?

Again there is perfect resignation. "Grieving" (*moerens*) is rare; "undeserving" (*immerens*) is almost unknown. Compare the impotent outburst of wrath against the gods in the epitaph of the Pagan maiden of twenty years: "*I, Procope, lift up my hands against the gods who took me hence, though innocent,*" with the calm submission of "*Here lies Damalis, as God wills;*" or, "*Marcus, innocent boy, you have already begun to be among the innocent.*" On Pagan tombs we find such epitaphs as

"*Farewell, farewell, oh most sweet, for ever and eternally, farewell.*"

"*Our hope was in our boy; now all is ashes and lamentation.*"

[1] Stanley, *Christian Institutions*, p. 251.

"*Once I was not; now I am not; I know nothing about it; it does not concern me.*"

"*Fortune makes many promises, but keeps none; live for the present.*"

Christianity knows nothing of these everlasting farewells, nothing of this absolute despair, or querulous indifference, or epicurean cynicism. Sweet as was the domestic life of the early converts, the sob of a purified natural affection which we hear in such short inscriptions as "*Innocent little lamb*," "*My little guileless dove*," "*Sweet and innocent soul*," is always checked by loving hope. Even persecution is pardoned, and there is neither any groaning over the fate of the martyrs, nor any allusion to their tortures, nor any cry for vengeance against their enemies. Everything shows the sweetness, the equality, the simplicity of life. "*Cornelius, Bishop, Martyr*," is enough to record the dignity and the end of an early Pope who had perished in exile. Death is felt to dwarf the inch-high altitudes of earthly distinction. In the catacombs the rich and the poor lie down together, and the servant is even as his master.

(iv.) Nor are the *frescoes* less instructive. Those from the New Testament—for reasons which we shall see immediately are not numerous, and are treated in a manner purely conventional—as, for instance, the Raising of Lazarus and the Healing of the Paralytic. Usually New Testament truths are shadowed forth by Old Testament analogies. Those who had seen Christian martyrs perish in the amphitheatre, or in Nero's gardens in the frightful agony of the *tunica molesta*, would rejoice at the repeated emblems of the Three Children, to whom the Son of Man was as the Angel of the Dew amid the seven-times-heated furnace. Those who had seen the Libyan lion bound on old man or fair

youth or gentle maiden, would feel all that was meant by pictures of the young Daniel, safe though naked among the lions. And Jonah, with the long thin-necked monster disgorging him upon the shore, told of the Christian victory, alike over death and over the old serpent. Sometimes, too, they baptized as it were the Orpheus of old mythology to make him a prophetic symbol, that the Son of Man would restore peace and order to the groaning and travailing creation. But their favourite picture by far was that of the Good or rather of the Fair Shepherd (ὁ καλὸς ποιμήν). That conception of our Lord finds but small place in any of the writings of the Fathers, and still less in scholastic theology. The place of it in Art has been taken by the Terrible Judge of Michael Angelo, the agonised sufferer of Velasquez, the Infant in His Mother's arms of Raphael; but to the early Christians of the catacombs, to slaves and artisans, to peasants and sufferers, the thought of the Shepherd was, as has been said, "Prayerbook and Articles, and creed, and canons, all in one;" a conception not vague and fleeting, or colourless, but "their food, their hope, the dogma of dogmas, the creed of their creeds, because the very life of their life."[1]

I have not mentioned the Cross, because if the Cross occurs at all in the catacombs it is only in the disguised forms of the Gammadias and the Monograms of Christ. The earliest certain Latin cross is on the tomb of the Empress Galla Placidia, A.D. 451. Nor is there any *realistic* picture of the crucifixion till the ninth century at the earliest; nor any certain crucifix till the sixth; nor any portable crucifix (it is said) till many centuries later. From the representations of the Dead Christ the early believers shrank as from an impiety. To them He

[1] Stanley, *Christian Institutions.*

was the Living, not the Dead Christ,—the triumphant, the glorified, the infinite, not the agonised Christ in that one brief hour and power of darkness, which was but the spasm of an eternal glorification. "It is Christ that died, yea rather (μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ), that is risen again, who also maketh intercession for us." "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." To them the Atonement was not only the Crucifixion, but the whole work of Christ from the Incarnation to the session at the right hand of God. To them the predominant conception of their Lord was ever that of "the Incarnate Word, the Present Friend, the Prince of Peace on earth, the Everlasting King in Heaven." What His life is, what His commandments are, what His judgments will be,—these things occupied their thoughts more than His earthly humiliation.[1] Their contemplations were turned less exclusively to what He once did, than to what He is doing now, and what He requires us to do. And without going so far as to say with a great living writer, that "the fall from that faith, and all the corruptions of its abortive practice, may be summed up briefly in the habitual contemplation of Christ's *death* instead of his *life*, and the substitution of His past sufferings for our present duty," we may truly say that the thought of the dead Christ in His agonised humanity can never be accepted as a complete or exclusive view of Him;—can never without deep harm be dissevered from the thought of Him in His eternal triumph and glorious majesty in the heavenly places.

But, more than this, the reserve of early worship shrank from any direct presentation even of the *living* Christ. Before the third century it had been for-

[1] Ruskin, *The Bible of Amiens.*

gotten by tradition whether He was, as St. Augustine argued, beautiful in every phase of life, and had "something starry" in His earthly aspect, or whether He was, according to the taunt of Celsus, marred and mean of aspect (δυσειδής). The Council of Elvira (*circ.* A.D. 306) forbade any representation of Christ. Eusebius of Caesarea (A.D. 323) shrank from any picture of Him as irreverent, and declined to send one to the Empress Constantia. Epiphanius, more than fifty years later, tore down in a church in Palestine a curtain on which was woven a representation of Him, and ordered the astonished priest to use it as the shroud of some pauper. Asterius, Bishop of Amasaea, rebuked the ladies of Constantinople for embroidering scenes from the Gospel upon their robes, and bade them not to paint Christ when He wore the form of a servant, but to carry His eternal image in their hearts.[1]

We cannot understand the trials of Christians in the second century without bearing constantly in mind that, even when persecution slumbered, Christianity remained a *religio illicita* from the days of Nero's persecution, and still more from the rescript of Trajan to Pliny in A.D. 112, down to the edict of Toleration first passed by Gallienus in A.D. 261. Pagans could always taunt Christians with the reproach, "*Non licet esse vos.*"[2] The Neronian persecution was aimed at Christians rather than at the existence of Christianity. Even as early as the reign of Claudius, Pomponia Graecina was charged with being a votary of a foreign superstition, which was probably Christianity, and was tried before a domestic tribunal. Under Domitian, Christianity had found its way into the imperial family. Flavius Clemens,

[1] See Westcott, *Relation of Christianity to Art* (Ep. of St. John, p. 330).
[2] Tert. *Apol.* 4.

who was a cousin of the Emperor, and a Consul,—whose sons had been nominated as successors to the Empire,—was put to death in all probability as a Christian; and his wife Domitilla was banished to the dreary island of Pandataria, where she endured "a long martyrdom."[1] But Trajan, for political reasons, passed rigid laws against all clubs and secret societies (*hetaeriae, collegia, sodalitia*), and after the reign of Hadrian, and the savage massacre of Christians by the false Messiah, Barcochba, the Romans ceased to confound Christianity with Judaism,[2] which *was* a tolerated religion. By the end of the first century Christians had become very numerous, and the spread of the Gospel in Bithynia was such as to force upon Pliny (who became *legatus pro praetore* in Sept. A.D. 111) the question as to their toleration or suppression. Accordingly, in the autumn of 112, he wrote to Trajan from Amisus (*Eski Samsun*), on the Black Sea, his famous request for advice. He knows that Christianity is a forbidden religion, but has had no experience in dealing judicially with the Christians, with whom he had probably come into contact at Amastris (*Amasserah*). Is he to make any difference in punishing Christians? Are the young to be punished as severely as the old, the weak as the strong? Are they still to be punished if they forswear their Christianity? Are they to be punished merely for *being* Christians, or for *committing crimes* as Christians? He then tells the Emperor what line of conduct he has

[1] See Euseb. *H. E.* iii. 18; Dion. Cass. lxvii. 14. He was charged with ἀθεότης, a constant charge against Christians. Comp. Suet. *Domit.* 15; Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 22.

[2] On this confusion see Acts xvi. 20, xviii. 15; Suet. *Claud.* 25. Tacitus, whose words Bernays detected in Sulp. Severus (*Chron.* ii. 30), says, "Christianos ex Judaeis extitisse; radice sublata stirpem facile perituram."

hitherto followed. He has ordered to execution all who persisted in confessing Christ, thinking that, in any case, pertinacity and inflexible obstinacy deserved correction. Many were accused to him anonymously, and then, if they were willing to offer incense to the image of the Emperor, and to curse Christ, he let them go. He adds a splendid testimony to their blamelessness. Even those who had long apostatised told him that the sum-total of their fault or error had been to assemble before the dawn and sing a hymn to Christ as God, and then to bind themselves by a mutual oath or sacrament—not, as was said, for any evil purpose, but never to steal, rob, commit adultery, break their word, or cheat. After this they separated, and only met again at a simple and innocent common meal in the evening, which practice they had abandoned when it was declared to be illegal. He tortured two poor deaconesses, but found that they had nothing to confess except a distorted and extravagant superstition. He admits that Christianity has spread everywhere into the villages, and that the temples would soon be desolate if Christians were not forced to apostatise. Trajan writes back to express his general approval. Pliny is not to hunt out the Christians, but if they are brought before his tribunal by credible witnesses, they are to be punished. "O sentence inherently confused," exclaimed Tertullian; "he says that they are not to be sought out as being innocent, yet orders them to be punished as being guilty!"

The reign of Trajan was dishonoured by the crucifixion of the aged Symeon, son of Clopas, Bishop of Jerusalem, about A.D. 106, and by Ignatius being thrown to the wild beasts at Rome about A.D. 110. The Empire determined to overawe and crush the young and apparently helpless faith, and never doubted its power to

trample this "execrable superstition" into the dust. "Yet where," it has been asked, "is the influence of Trajan and Pliny, and thousands such as they were, now?" It is as little felt as that of the "men who lived in the days before the Flood."[1] But to Christianity belongs not only the past but all the future of the world. Against Christ's kingdom the gates of hell cannot prevail. Even Trajan's rescript was used by some provincial governors as a shield for the Christians rather than as a sword.[2] And two centuries later a Christian Emperor summoned more than three hundred bishops to meet in the very province from which his predecessor had endeavoured to root out the faith by rack and sword.

From Trajan's time, for nearly a hundred years, persecution was only sporadic; but it never entirely ceased. Hadrian, "the crowned Lucian, regarding the world as a frivolous game," leaned, on the whole, to the side of toleration,[3] though Telesphorus, Bishop of Rome, and other martyrs[4] perhaps perished in his reign. Under Antoninus Pius, Polycarp witnessed for Christ by his death in A.D. 155, and Publius, Bishop of Athens, and Ptolemæus and Lucius. Marcus Aurelius, in his meditations, only once mentions the Christians, whose endurance, under martyrdom, he attributes to "bare obstinacy" (ψιλὴ παράταξις). In his reign Justin Martyr was put to death in Rome (A.D. 168); and in A.D. 177 occurred the

[1] Mossman, *Hist. of the Cath. Ch.* p. 154.

[2] Uhlhorn, *Conflict of Christianity with Heathendom*, p. 258.

[3] See his Rescript to Minucius Fundanus *circa* A.D. 124 (*ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 8, 9). Its genuineness has been doubted by Keim and others (see Keim, *Aus der Urchristenthum*); but he is praised in the pseudo-Sibylline books. In his letter to the Consul Servianus he sneeringly classes the Christians with the worshippers of Serapis, and all other quacks—"Unus illis Deus nullus est." Jerome says that he stopped persecution in consequence of the Apologies presented to him at Athens.

[4] Comp. Acts xvi 20, xviii. 15. Sueton. *Claud.* 25.

persecutions at Lyons and Vienne, in which, among other martyrs, there perished the aged Bishop Pothinus, the boy Ponticus, and the slave-girl Blandina; and at Autun the well-born youth Symphorian. The Stoic philosophy of Marcus Aurelius made him disdain the Christians; they offended his Roman sense of order, and his mind was poisoned against them by his tutor Fronto, whom he greatly admired.[1] Commodus, perhaps under the influence of his concubine Marcia, the θεοσεβὴς παλλάκη, left the Christians undisturbed, though the Senator Apollonius was condemned, A.D. 186, on the information of his slave.[2] In the reign of Severus there was a persecution at Alexandria, in which Leonides, the father of Origen, was beheaded, and Potamiaena tortured to death; and at Carthage, Perpetua and Felicitas were the most conspicuous martyrs. The Christians enjoyed a long repose, from A.D. 211-235, under Caracalla Elagabalus and Alexander Severus.[3] Maximin persecuted them with fury; and after a brief pause, in the reigns of Gordian and Philip, there followed the persecutions of Decius and Valerian, of which we shall read in the Life of Cyprian. The calm which followed Gallienus's edict of Toleration, lasted for forty years, and was only broken by the final fury of Diocletian and his colleagues. The failure of those terrific efforts wrung from Galerius his scornful and despairing edict of Toleration in A.D. 311.[4]

[1] See Minuc. Fel. 9 and 31. He wrote an oration against the Christians, in which he endorsed the grossest calumnies.

[2] The slave was himself put to death as a *delator* of his master. The mere acceptance of his testimony was against the ancient law (Cicero, *pro. Deiot.* i. Tac. *Ann.* ii. 30). Marcia is said to have rescued Christians from the mines of Sardinia.

[3] Yet it was under Severus that Ulpian (*De Officio Proconsulis*) collected the rescripts against Christians.

[4] This curious document is a practical confession of defeat. See Neander, i. 213.

In 313 the victorious Constantine issued the famous decree—"*Ut daremus Christianis et omnibus liberam protestatem sequendi religionem quam quisque voluisset*"[1]—which was but a preliminary for that new epoch in which Christianity passed into the religion of the state, and became in her turn the oppressor and persecutor of a decaying Paganism.

But even short of persecution, it was not an easy thing for Christians to endure the strong contempt and frantic hatred of the world.[2] In these days we can scarcely have an adequate conception of this virulent detestation. It appears as early as the reign of Nero. That human monster would not have been able to divert from himself upon the Christians the odious suspicion of having been the incendiary of his own capital, if he had not been well aware that they were the object of popular detestation. To do away with the rumour, Nero, says Tacitus, trumped up an accusation against men, hated for their enormities, whom the common people called Christians. After mentioning the condemnation of Christ by Pontius Pilate, he adds that "the deadly superstition, after having been repressed for a time, was again breaking out, not only throughout Judaea, where the curse originated, but even throughout the city, which is the common sewer and metropolis of all things repulsive or shameful." Their hatred for the human race was, he says, sufficient justification for their being condemned; but the fearful way in which they were tortured kindled

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* x. 5. Lact. *De Mort. Persec.* 48.

[2] It is to this hatred that we owe those invaluable Christian *Apologies* which have added so much to our knowledge of the history and theology of the early Christians. In Greek we have the two *Apologies* of Justin Martyr, and those of Tatian, the author of *The Epistle to Diognetus*, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, and Origen; in Latin, those of Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius.

some pity for them, though they were guilty and deserved the extremest punishments. But it became a sort of fashion among literary men to describe Christianity in the way that Tacitus had done. Pliny, in the letter already quoted, calls it a "distorted and extravagant superstition, aggravated by contumacy and inflexible obstinacy." Suetonius describes it as a "new and malefic superstition." Caecilius, the heathen interlocutor, in *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, calls Christians "men of a lawless, reckless, and desperate faction, and their faith empty and mad." The heathen in Lactantius describes it as "an impious and crude superstition." "*Publici hostes Christiani*," was the general verdict of the Romans, "*homines deploratae illicitae ac desperatae factionis.*" "Away with the atheists!" shouted the mobs at the amphitheatre. "Away with the witch, away with the sorceress!" were the cries which greeted the martyr St. Anastasia. Galerius characterises the new religion as a "nefarious conspiracy." How vile and furious were the charges against the early Christians we shall see again and again in the lives which follow. They had to know by experience the beatitude of universal malediction.[1]

Nor was this hatred confined to the heathen. The heretics were not behindhand in pouring scorn upon the Catholics. In days when they resisted the burden of legalistic asceticism, the Montanists taunted them as "the carnal." Because they stood fast by the simplicity of primitive Christianity, the Manichees called them "the simple;" and the Aerians "the antique." Because they would not shut the doors of mercy on the lapsed, the Novatians denounced them as "apostates;" and the Donatists as "traitors," and "servants of Anti-

[1] See Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 208-240.

christ." Because they would accept neither the doctrines nor the discipline of inflated and new-fangled heresies, Valentinians called them "the worldly;" and Apollinarians, "man-worshippers;" and Alexandrian Gnostics, "Pelusiotae," or "stickers in the mud." Nor were they only subjected to vague abuse as traitors, and public enemies, and morose encumbrances of civil life—"men," as the Pagan says in *Minucius Felix*, "useless in business, dumb in public, garrulous in corners!" Over and over again, in every region of the Empire, they were accused of "Thyestean banquets," in which they murdered and drank the blood of infants; and "Œdipodean unions," in which they shamed the dearest ties of blood.[1] And even these preposterous slanders showed amazing vitality. They lasted for centuries, and died hard. Alike by the laws of the twelve tables (*separatim nemo habescit Deos*), and by the recognised policy of the Empire, they stood condemned as the "bringers-in of new gods," as "atheists," and as "superstitious."[2]

But besides the detestation of Christianity as a religion by Jews, Pagans, and heretics, there was the active social and political hostility engendered by the attitude of the Christians towards all those numerous classes whose livelihood depended on the amusements, the worship, and the general institutions of heathen life. The makers of silver shrines (*aediculae*) at Ephesus, who raised the riot to murder St. Paul, were representatives of a class. All idol-makers, flower-sellers, purveyors of victims, architects of temples, sculptors, painters, decorators, oraclemongers, soothsayers, augurs,

[1] Tatian, *c. Gent.* 33. Min. Fel. *Octav.* 8, 9, 28. Justin, *Apol.* 1-26. Tert. *Apol.* 7, *ad Nat.* i. 7; *Ep. Vienn. et Lugd.* ap. Euseb. *H. E.* v. 1. Iren. *Fragm.* 13. These are the *atrocia* and *pudenda* to which Tacitus refers. See Lightfoot, *Ignat.* i. 52.

[2] Cic. *De Legg*, ii. 9. Dion. Cass. ii. 36.

astrologers, casters of horoscopes; all charioteers, gladiators, boxers, athletes, actors, players in mimes, singers, dancers, tavern-keepers,—all the vast throng of the degraded, and the reprobate who lived by ministering to guilty pleasures,—were arrayed in arms against those whose victory would be their ruin.[1] Politicians hated the subverters of ancestral institutions. Impostors like Alexander of Abonoteichos, and sham cynics like Crescens at Rome, detested those who exposed their tricks and hypocrisies. Philosophers might speak as plainly as Christians about the "ignoble rabble of gods;"[2] but they never took the trouble to understand the difference between their own views—which valued above all things the possibility of suicide,[3]—and the exultant joyousness of the Gospel, the faith which thanked God for life, and smiled more serenely than they could do at death. They shared with the populace the idiotic belief that Christians worshipped the head of an ass.[4] What historians and littérateurs thought of Christianity we may find not only in Lucian, "the Rabelais of his age," but in Tacitus, Pliny, Celsus, and in the heathen slanders reproduced and refuted by all the Apologists in succession. The rude and coarse *graffito* scrawled on a chamber wall of the palace of the Cæsars, and found in 1857, where a man is represented worshipping an ass-headed figure upon a cross, with the inscription "*Alexamenos adores his God*,"[5] represents something more than the popular attitude of the Pagans towards Christianity. If there was a drought, the

[1] See Wordsworth, *Ch. History*, i. 91; Neander, i. 126.

[2] Sen. *ap.* Aug. *Civ. Dei*, vi. 10.

[3] See Plin. *H.N.* ii. 4; vii. 1. Friedländer, *Sittengesch Rom.* iii. 427.

[4] Tert. *Apol.* 16; *ad Natt.* i. 11.

[5] See Wordsworth, *Tour in Italy*, ii. 142. Some have supposed that the figure represents Anubis.

Christians were taxed with it; if there was a plague, Æsculapius was angry because of the Christians. "Away with the impious!" and "the Christians to the lions!" were the popular cries in the ampitheatres of Greece and the colonies of Rome.

Yet in spite of all,—in spite of fire, and stake, and the swords of thirty legions, and "the oppression of a perpetual hissing,"—the Christians, alike old and young, alike rich and poor, stood gloriously and even exultantly firm. They took joyfully the spoiling of their possessions, knowing that they had their own selves for a better possession and an abiding. They braved death because death to them was life. And so they overcame the world, and handed to us, across the darkness and tumult of the centuries, the brightening torch of Revelation and of truth.

Beyond the power of estimate has been the blessing of their work and the force of their example; and the days may yet come when nothing short of a similar sacrifice will re-convert the world.

I

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, BISHOP AND MARTYR

"What is martyrdom
But death-defying utterance of truth?"
G. Eliot.

We are only able to read the history of the Early Christian Church in brief gleams of sunlight. Between these there are periods of darkness in which we are left to theory and conjecture. In the writings of Clement we catch a glimpse of the state of Christian thought in Rome and the general condition of the Church of Corinth about A.D. 95. From the Letters of Ignatius, and the traditions respecting him, we learn something about the Churches of Asia Minor at the beginning of the second century. And we become at once conscious that in the

Editions of Ignatius, and Authorities.

J. Pearson, *Vindiciae Ignatianae*, Cambridge, 1872 (ed. E. Churton, *Angl. Cath. Libr.* Oxford, 1852). Baur, *Die Ignatianischen Briefe*, Tüb. 1848. W. Cureton, *Corpus Ignatianum*, London, 1849.

Theod. Zahn, I. Ignatii et Polycarpi, *Epistulae, Martyria, Fragmenta*, Leps., 1876.

Id. *Ignatius von Antiochien*, Gotha, 1873.

Funk, *Opera Patr. Apost.* vol. 1, Tüb. 1878.

Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, London, 1885.

Others are referred to in the Notes.

brief space of about twenty years there has been a rapid development of Christian institutions, and a marked change in the tone of Christian society. In reading Clement we are struck by his unlearned and practical simplicity, which mainly contents itself with reproducing the thoughts of others, and relies for its expression on their very phrases. In reading the Epistles of Ignatius we are, for the first time, in contact with two new elements—a vehement conviction of the need for "Episcopal" supremacy, and a passionate enthusiasm for death by martyrdom. Clement shows the calmness and reasonableness of a Roman; Ignatius writes with all the fire and impetuosity of an Oriental Greek. There is in his imagination "a touch of phantasy and flame." Clement, says Bishop Lightfoot, is a *moderator*, Ignatius an *impeller*. In Clement we find the "intensity of moderation" (ἐκτενὴς ἐπιείκεια), in Ignatius the "intensity of passion."[1] The contrast is caused in part by difference of nationality, partly also by the intervening growth of heresy and persecution.

There is a superficial truth in the often-quoted remark that the best and ablest of the Roman Emperors —men like Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Decius, and Diocletian—became persecutors of Christianity, while the worst and vilest—men like Elagabalus, Commodus, and Caracalla—left the Church unmolested.[2] No doubt there may have been special and incidental reasons for this fact, but the general causes are not far to seek.

[1] Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers*, II. i. p. 1.

[2] Trajan and the earlier Emperors, "se tiennent à l'égard . . . du Christianisme dans une sorte d'éloignement hautain."—Renan, *Les Évangiles*, p. 392. Tertullian (*Apol.* 5) reverses the statement, and says of Nero and Domitian, "Tales semper nobis insecutores, injusti, impii, turpes." (Comp. Melito *ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 26; and Lactantius, *De Mort. Persec.* 3.) Alexander Severus and Philippus Arabs were not persecutors, but neither were they genuine Romans.

The great Pagan Emperors saw, in the growth of the new religion, a disintegrating power working in the midst of that Empire which it was their duty to protect. They were not in a position to judge fairly of Christianity. They sweepingly condemned it as a religion which had long been stigmatised as illegal, and which necessarily shifted the centre of gravity of men's thoughts from the immediate welfare of the State to the limited welfare of their own society.[1] Their dislike was intensified by the alarm with which they viewed every sort of club and illicit assemblage. In Trajan's correspondence with Pliny, we see that he was even jealous of guilds of firemen, and of subscription suppers, and he would therefore specially dislike meetings, before dawn and after dark, of men who were popularly accused of every crime. No doubt the general attitude of the Pagans towards the Christians was, as Tertullian says, "You have no right to exist." The Church has been magnanimous to these her ancient enemies. She has not branded them with the charge of wanton cruelty. She has spoken of them in terms ten-thousandfold more generous and respectful than she has bestowed on base rulers who did *not* imbrue their hands in the blood of her martyrs. Trajan was a persecutor, yet she has not by any means despaired of his salvation;[2] Marcus Aurelius was a persecutor, yet she has spoken

[1] "What is not useful for the swarm is not useful to the bee."—Marc. Aurel. vi. 54.

[2] See *Carm. Sibyll*, x. 147-163. Eusebius (*H. E.* iii. 31-33) is favourable to Trajan, and represents his persecution as only local. Sept. Severus (Chron. ii. 31) speaks well of him. Dante alludes to the far-famed legend that St. Gregory by his prayers (Paul Diacon. *Vit. Greg.* 27) delivered the soul of Trajan from hell. *Purg.* x. 73-96 :—

"L'alta gloria
Del Roman prince, lo cui gran valore
Mosse Gregorio alla sua gran vittoria."

with deserved tenderness of that serious and noble spirit.

Very little is known of the martyr Ignatius. Had it not been for his tragic end, he would hardly have left the shadow of a name.

The name Ignatius was not uncommon. It was nothing more than a dialectic variation from the name Egnatius,[1] borne by the two great Samnite generals who fell respectively at Sentinum in B.C. 298 and during the Marsian War (B.C. 40) in the vain struggle to maintain the independence of their country. It is probably derived from *gnatus*, but the false derivation from *ignis* led to Ignatius's Syriac title *Nurono*, or "the inflamed," which was subsequently explained in reference to his burning love for Christ. Although his name is Latin, the mode of his death shows that he was not a Roman citizen. He bore the second name Theophoros, which has led to three unfounded stories respecting him. Interpreted to mean "borne by God" (*Theophóros*), it was the source of the fancy that he was one of the little ones whom Jesus took in his arms, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them.[2] Understood as the "God-bearer" (*Theóphoros*), it was the germ of the story, mentioned in Vincent of Beauvais, that when his heart was cut to pieces the name of Jesus was found written in golden letters on every fragment.[3] It is also the basis of the interesting fiction of his interview with Trajan, which deserves a brief narration.[4]

[1] Renan refers to *Corp. inscr. Graec.* No. 4129. Egnatius was one name of the infamous Publ. Celer. (Juv. *Sat.* iii. 114; Tac. *Ann.* xvi. 32).

[2] This fancy is first found in Anastasius Bibliothecarius (ninth century) and in Symeon Metaphrastes in the tenth century.

[3] Lightfoot, l. c. p. 28.

[4] It cannot be a true story, for Ignatius had not been condemned by

The story is told in the *Antiochene Acts* of his martyrdom.

"Who art thou, poor devil?"[1] asked Trajan.

"No one," answered Ignatius, "calls a God-bearer a *kakodaemon*, unless you mean thereby that having Christ, a heavenly king, I confound the devils of the Demons."

"And who," asked Trajan, "is a God-bearer?"

"He," answered Ignatius, "that has Christ in his breast."

"Dost thou not think that we too have gods in our heart?"

"Thou art deceived," said Ignatius, "when thou callest the devils of the nations gods. There is one God, and Christ Jesus His Son."

"Do you mean him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?" asked the Emperor.

"I speak," he answered, "of Him that nailed on the Cross sin and its author, and sentenced every malice of the devil to be trodden down of them who carry Him in their heart."

"Dost thou then carry Christ within thyself?"

"Yes," replied the martyr, "for it is written, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.'"

Then Trajan gave sentence:

"Let Ignatius, who says he carries the Crucified in himself, be fettered, taken to Rome, and thrown to the wild beasts to amuse the people."

And Ignatius heartily thanked God.

the Emperor at all. If he had been, it would have been useless for the Roman Christians to exert themselves in his favour. Eusebius (*H. E.* iii. 36) knows nothing of it. No Greek could really have given such a sense to *kakodaemon* as Ignatius is represented to have done.

[1] This is clearly the colloquial meaning of κακοδαίμων here. Suid. ὁ θεῷ ἐπαχθής. Comp. Arist. *Ep.* 112.

Of his birth, rank, and education nothing is known. From some of his expressions it has been inferred, but only in a precarious way, that his parents were Pagans; that he was by birth a slave;[1] and that, like St. Paul, whose language he adopts, he was only converted to Christ as an untimely birth (ἔκτρωμα) after he had attained manhood and had lived through a careless and sinful youth.[2] This may possibly be the explanation of the depreciating terms which he frequently applies to himself. We know not by whom, or under what circumstances, he was converted; and although he succeeded Evodius as the second (or, if we count St. Peter, as the third) Bishop of Antioch, we have no record to show by whom or at what date he was appointed to this office. There is nothing to authenticate the statement that he had ever seen our Lord or His Apostles, and it seems certain that he was never a *pupil* of St. John,[3] to whom, even in writing to the Ephesians, he makes no direct allusion. Indeed Zahn goes so far as to say that there is not in the Letters of St. Ignatius the very slightest trace that he had ever heard the gospel directly preached by the Apostles.

Apart from his martyrdom, we are told but one fact about his episcopate, and even this may be nothing more than an inference from one of his own expressions.[4] It is said by Socrates[5] that he introduced antiphonal singing into the Church of Antioch after he had "seen a vision of angels praising the Holy Trinity in antiphonal hymns." He may have helped to make antiphonal

[1] See *ad Rom.* 4, ἐκεῖνοι ἐλεύθεροι, ἐγὼ δὲ μέχρι νῦν δοῦλος. Zahn, p. 410; Lightfoot, p. 210.

[2] *Ad Rom.* 9, ὧν ἔσχατος αὐτῶν καὶ ἔκτρωμα.

[3] On the origin of this mistake see Lightfoot, p. 473.

[4] See *Ep. ad Trall.* 5, δύναμαι νοεῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια.

[5] *H. E.* vi. 8.

singing popular in the East, as Ambrose did in the West, but the practice itself is as old as the days of the Levites in the Temple of Solomon, and Pliny mentions it as prevalent among the Christians of Bithynia as early as A.D. 112.[1]

All that we really know about the martyrdom of Ignatius is derived from his own letters. The various martyrologies may occasionally preserve actual incidents, but they are too late, and too demonstrably untrustworthy, to be accepted as authorities.

His letters show us that he, and perhaps others with him, were the victims of a purely local, partial, and transient persecution. He was probably sacrificed to the violence of a popular *émeute*, unresisted by the arbitrary caprice of a governor, who, in acting against an illegal sect, was left largely to his own discretion. The outburst of Pagan violence may have been due to some calamity, such as an earthquake or a drought; for the Pagan priests, who at Antioch were a numerous class, assiduously attributed such misfortunes to the anger of the gods, alienated they said by the growing neglect of their worship.

Of the charges laid against him, and of his trial, nothing is mentioned. We first see him as a man doomed to death; and since he was not a Roman citizen either by birth or purchase, he knows that he will not be beheaded, but either devoured by wild beasts in the amphitheatre, or burnt alive, and possibly in either case killed by the stab of the *confector's* knife. He was sent to Rome to die, perhaps because the government thought that an example was needed to terrify the Christians, or for the horrible reason that a continuous

[1] *Ep.* x. 97, "Carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum *invicem*." *Carmen*, however, may only mean a set form of words.

supply of condemned victims was necessary for the wild-beast shows in which Trajan delighted, and for which it was always desired to secure victims of noble and venerable presence.[1] His case, therefore, differed from that of St. Paul. He had not appealed unto Caesar; nay more, his chief anxiety was lest the unwelcome compassion of the Roman Church should lead its members to intercede for him, and he should thus be robbed of the martyr's crown which he so passionately desired.

From Antioch, then, he set forth with cheerful gladness to meet his fate. He is an illustrious example of the divine paradox of Christianity—the secret which it possessed of joy in sorrow, strength in weakness, and the sense of triumph amid apparently absolute defeat. He had been consigned to a maniple of ten soldiers, whose duty it probably was to arrest and take charge of other prisoners on their long route. The task was doubtless dreary, repellent, and fatiguing to them. Whatever were the hardships endured by the prisoners in huge unseaworthy vessels, and in long journeys over bleak mountains and dusty plains, the soldiers were of necessity unwilling sharers in their miseries. One of them was always fastened by one arm with a coupling-chain to the prisoner, whom they would all despise as an obscure Syrian convict, the tedious votary of an "execrable" and half-Jewish "superstition." The ordinary tender mercies of the rude Roman legionary at the best of times were but cruel, and the disagreeable conditions of so trying a journey were not likely to mollify them. Ignatius complains that his guardians

[1] In A.D. 106, at Trajan's show 10,000 gladiators fought. The Digest quotes a rule that condemned victims are not to be liberated by provincial governors, "*Si ejus roboris et artificii sint ut digne populo Romano exhiberi possint.*"

were like "ten leopards," so that he was "fighting with wild beasts" all the way to Rome, "by land and sea, by night and day."[1] He complains that "they only wax worse when they are kindly treated." We must suppose from the latter phrase that if any money was given them to purchase little remissions and indulgences, the hope of further gain only made them more cruel and more exacting. Blackmailing was profitable, and the Christians were generous. Yet from this rough treatment Ignatius says that he was a gainer. It taught him to become more completely a disciple.

We do not know with certainty the route which the martyr followed. Probably his escort sailed with him from Seleucia, the port of Antioch, to Attalia in Pamphylia. Thence they made their way overland to Laodicea, and at the bifurcation of the roads, near the confluence of the Lycus and Maeander, they chose the northern route, which led through Hierapolis, Philadelphia, and Sardis to Smyrna. We know that they took this route, because Ignatius alludes to his stay at Philadelphia. He praises the bishop of that city for his gentleness and modesty, but he found that though the Church was not divided, its members showed a certain "infiltration" of evil which they had managed to drain away (*ἀποδιυλισμόν*).[2] His experiences in the city had not been altogether happy. In some way or other some of the Philadelphian Christians had tried to deceive him in matters of daily life (*κατὰ σάρκα*), and he had held a sharp discussion with certain Judaisers.[3] On the other hand, he had enjoyed his intercourse with

[1] *Ad Rom.* *θηριομαχῶ . . . ἐνδεδεμένος δέκα λεοπάρδοις, ὅ ἐστιν στρατιωτικὸν τάγμα οἳ καὶ εὐεργετούμενοι χείρους γίνονται.* Even Pliny (*H. N.* viii. 17) speaks of "*leones* quos *pardi* generavere," so that the attempt to treat the word as an anachronism fails.

[2] *Ad Philad.* 3. [3] Id. 7, 8.

the Church; and the friends who afterwards joined him —the Cilician deacon Philo and Raius Agathopus—bore witness to the kind hospitality of the Philadelphian community, although they too had reason to complain of some unfriendliness.

It is clear from this letter, as from others, that Ignatius, like St. Paul, was indulged with a certain amount of liberty, since all chance of *escape* was out of the question. In this respect the organisation of the Empire was so perfect that it was enough to bid a person to go into exile into the remotest district, and it was certain that he would go. No hiding-place was possible; no disguise could conceal any man from the eye of Rome.

It must have been no small mitigation of the martyr's trials that he was allowed to discourse with the Christians of every city in which he stayed. In this respect also the circumstances of his journey closely resemble those of the Apostle of the Gentiles. In point of fact, from the moment of his condemnation he became more and more in the eyes of the Christians a memorable personage, whom it was a privilege to see, and with whom it was an honour to converse. His counsels were invested with supreme authority, and the highest consideration was everywhere paid to his person. Whether Lucian did or did not refer directly to the journey of Ignatius and the martyrdom of Polycarp in his bitter satire "On the death of Peregrinus Proteus," it is quite certain that the circumstances with which he surrounds his strange and disreputable adventurer are drawn from the life.[1]

[1] See Renan, *Les Évangiles*, p. 493, who calls it "un curieux petit roman." Peregrinus burnt himself alive at the Olympian games, A.D. 165. Lucian was perhaps mainly satirising a spurious *cynicism*, but he clearly meant some of his shafts to glance aside to the Christians. He speaks of

We read of no other halt until the little company reached Smyrna. At that city they stayed some days, perhaps while they were waiting for a vessel to take them on to Alexandria Troas.

The fact of the martyr's condemnation had been made known far and wide. At Smyrna he was met by deputies from Tralles, Magnesia, and Ephesus, through which cities he would have passed if the soldiers had chosen to go by the southern instead of the northern line of route. The Churches of these cities had probably been informed of his movements by Christians who met him at Laodicea, or at some point near the junction of the roads. Since they lost the advantage of his visit, they at once despatched deputies to meet him at Smyrna, and to report his words.

These deputies greatly refreshed his spirit by their intercourse, and by the proofs which they afforded that the sympathy of the Churches of Asia was deeply moved on his behalf. From Magnesia came the Bishop Damas, the Presbyters Bassus and Apollonius, and the Deacon Zotion, whom Ignatius describes as pious and worthy men.[1] From Tralles came Bishop Polybius, in whose cheering presence he seemed to gaze on the whole community, and who brought with him some "godly benevolence" (*τὴν κατὰ Θεὸν εὔνοιαν*) in the form perhaps of a contribution to the martyr's needs. Ephesus was but forty miles from Smyrna, and had therefore sent more numerous deputies. These were the Bishop Onesimus, a man of great modesty and gentleness, for whom Ignatius felt the warmest regard;[2] Euplus and

the devotion lavished upon Peregrinus by old women and widows; of his guards and his fetters; of the attention paid to his words; of his epistles and emissaries. He says that Peregrinus had learnt the wondrous wisdom of the Christians by intercourse with their priests and scribes in Palestine.

[1] *Ad Magn.* 2. [2] *Ad Eph.* 1, 5, 6.

Fronto, of whom nothing special is said; Crocus ("a name very dear to me") who probably acted as his amanuensis when he wrote his letter to the Romans;[1] and Burrhus, who made himself so useful, that Ignatius begs the Ephesians to spare him that he might be a friend and companion,[2] just as St. Paul would fain have begged Philemon to spare to him the services of Onesimus.[3] In all the four letters which Ignatius wrote from Smyrna, he speaks with grateful affection of these Ephesian deputies, and we are glad to learn the flourishing condition of a Church to which, among others, St. Paul had written the most beautiful of his letters—the encyclical Epistle of "the Heavenlies," the Epistle of the Ascension, the lofty and spiritual letter which is still called (though inaccurately) the Epistle to the Ephesians.

The Church of Smyrna was not behindhand in consoling the sorrows of its illustrious guest. Euteknos, Attalus his beloved, the incomparable (ἀσύγκριτος) Daphnos, Alkè, "the name for which I yearn,"[4] and the household of Gavia, the wife or widow of Epitropos,[5] are all mentioned in terms of gratitude; but above all Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, who was himself destined to play so heroic a part on the stage of martyrdom forty-five years later. The widows, who might almost be deemed worthy of the name of virgins,[6] took their share in lightening the sufferings of the doomed victim. The name of the Virgin Alkè suggests touching associations. When it became time for Polycarp "to play the man," and to show that the Christian

[1] *Ad Rom.* 10. [2] *Ad Eph.* 2. [3] *Philem.* 13.

[4] *Ad Smyrn.* 13, *ad Polyc.* 8, τὸ ποθητόν μοι ὄνομα.

[5] *Ad Polyc.* 8.

[6] See Bishop Lightfoot's note on Ign. *ad Smyrn.* 13, τὰς παρθένους τὰς λεγομένας χήρας.

is not afraid to die for Christ, Niketes the brother, and Herodes, the nephew of the faithful lady, were (as we shall see) the chief agents in dragging to death her beloved and aged bishop.

We do not know how long Ignatius and his ten "leopards," and the little band of friends and fellow-captives who probably accompanied him,[1] halted at Smyrna. Probably it was only for a few days. But these few days were of the utmost value to the history of the Church; they gave Ignatius the leisure and opportunity to write four letters, which throw one flash of light on years which otherwise would be lost in oblivion. The letters were very brief; probably the longest of them—that to the Ephesians—could without difficulty have been written in a day. They are also of the simplest character. In themselves, so far as any profound or original thought is concerned, they would be nearly valueless. They derive their importance almost exclusively from the insight which they give us into the thoughts of an early Christian martyr eighteen centuries ago, and from the indications which they furnish of the condition of Christian Churches at a period for which we are left almost destitute of other documents.

These four letters were written to the four Churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, and Rome.

In his letter to the EPHESIANS—the most elaborate of the seven—he first speaks of the Church of their city in terms of high eulogy, and thanks them for the sympathy shown him by their delegates, especially Onesimus, whose love was inexpressible (1).[2] He begs

[1] *Ten* guards would certainly not have been sent merely to conduct a single prisoner.

[2] *Ad Eph.* 1, τῷ ἐπ' ἀγάπῃ ἀδιηγήτῳ.

them to let their presbyter, Burrhus, stay with him as a companion, and speaks warmly of their other deputies (2). He does not write to them as a ruler. He is but a learner, together with them. He exhorts them to harmony with the mind of God, and implies that this will be exemplified by their being in harmony with their bishop, since "the bishops who are settled in the farthest parts of the earth are in the mind of Jesus Christ," just as "Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the mind of the Father" (3). He praises them therefore because their presbytery is attuned to the bishop as its strings are to a harp. Their blameless unity suggests the unbroken harmony and individual melody of a choir (4). His own blessed intercourse with their bishop shows him how happy they must feel from being so closely joined with him. Obedience to the bishop is obedience to God, and if any withdraw himself from the congregation he shows pride. The spiritual sacrifice of prayer, which is the condition of spiritual sustenance, can only be duly offered within the court of the altar, that is, in the community of the Bishop and the Church[1] (5). Onesimus bears witness to their orderly submission, which is all the more creditable to them from his modest reticence; and Ignatius praises them for this because "plainly we ought to regard the bishop as the Lord himself." Their freedom from heresy is also praiseworthy (6), and all the more because certain heretics like "mad dogs, biting by stealth," had tried to insinuate errors respecting the nature of Christ, "the one only physician of flesh and spirit, generate and ingenerate,[2]

[1] See Bishop Lightfoot's note on *ad Eph.* 5, *ἐὰν μή τις ᾖ ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, ὑστερεῖται τοῦ ἄρτου.*

[2] *γεννητὸς καὶ ἀγέννητος*, *i.e.* generate as man, and ingenerate as God, though later theology said that the Son was "begotten" (*γεννητὸς*) even in His Godhead, though not "made" (*κτιστός*). Lightfoot, l.c. II. sect. i. p. 90.

God in man, true life in death, Son of Mary and Son of God, first passible then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord" (7). Their spiritual-mindedness saved them from being misled, and he gladly devoted himself as an offering for a Church so famous[1] (8). Their faithful steadfastness made them as stones of a heavenly temple. In reference to recent Pagan pomps at Ephesus in which the people had carried offerings to the shrine of Artemis, he compares them to a procession "carrying your God and your shrine, your Christ and your holy things, being arrayed from head to foot in the commandments of Jesus Christ" (9). He bids them to pray for all mankind, and to return good for evil, abiding in Christ (10). These are the last times, a thought which demands reverence and godly fear, and disenchantment from the world. He regards his own fetters as spiritual pearls in which he hopes to rise again, and be united with them (11). He is a convict; they have received mercy. He is walking in the footsteps of Paul, and they are helping him on his way (12). He urges them to more frequent united services (13) which will tend to faith, love, and good fruits (14). Action and sincerity are better than mere words (15). Wilful corruption of the faith deserves the unquenchable fire (16), since it robs the Church of that fragrant incorruptibility which was typified by the perfume poured on the Head of Christ (17). At this point he enters on a discourse about the Incarnation as illustrating the wisdom of God's scheme for our redemption. His baptism and passion sanctified the water of baptism (18). The virginity of Mary, her child-bearing, and the

[1] *περίψημα ὑμῶν* (comp. *ἀντίψυχον*, c. 21). The phrase does not here mean "I am the meanest among you" (comp. 1 Cor. iv. 13), but "I devote my life for you," as in Orig. *In Joann.* xxviii. sect. 14 (Lightfoot).

death of Christ were three mysteries of proclamation[1] hidden from the devil but first proclaimed by the star of Bethlehem, which announced the destruction of evil and the abolishing of death[2] (19). Breaking off from this topic, with a promise to continue it, if God permit, in another letter, he once more exhorts them to public worship, and obedience to their bishop and presbyters, "breaking one bread which is the medicine of immortality, the antidote, that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ"[3] (20). He ends with expressions of regard, and a request for their prayers for himself and for the Church of Syria[4] (21).

This letter may serve as a type of the others. Writing to the MAGNESIANS he praises their unity, and rejoices that they obey their bishop Damas in spite of his youth, and not merely in profession but in reality.[5] The choice in this world is between life and death; and death to the world is spiritual life in Christ. He therefore urges upon them the duties of unity and submission, which will be their safeguard against the temptation to relapse into a Judaism, which perhaps leaned to the

[1] *τρία μυστήρια κραυγῆς.*

[2] Origen Hom. 6, *in Luc.* (opp. *De la Rue*, iii. 938) refers to this passage, and also Theophilus of Antioch and many others. See Cotelerius, p. 468.

[3] *ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν.*

[4] It is undoubtedly a curious circumstance that neither in this letter nor in that to Polycarp does he allude directly to St. John, though he had lived so long at Ephesus, and had only died some twelve years previously. On the other hand (1) the letter is brief and casual. (2.) He does allude to "the Apostles" (*ad Eph.* 10). (3.) The *omission* of the reference would scarcely be possible in the case of a *forger*. Further, there are in the Ignatian Epistles twenty-two passages which Bishop Lightfoot regards as *references* to St. John's Gospel—one being an actual quotation (*ad Philad.* 9)—and five to the Epistles. Perhaps the strongest are *ὁ ἄρχων αἰῶνος τούτου* and *ὕδωρ ζῶν*. See, further, Westcott, on *The Canon*, p. 35.

[5] This letter is memorable as containing the earliest instance of the word "Christianity" (*χριστιανισμός*, *ad Magn.* 10).

Docetic heresy,[1] and tried to explain away the reality of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.[2]

Writing to the Christians of TRALLES, he warns them to be submissive to their grave and gentle bishop Polybius, and to their presbyters, and to be reverent to their deacons, and to shun the rank herbage of heresy. Above all they must beware of Docetic teaching, and hold fast to the reality of Christ's human life. If Christ had been as the Docetae taught, a mere phantasm, why should he be in bonds and ready to fight with wild beasts?[3]

The fourth letter written at Smyrna—that to the ROMANS—is of a different character. It is the only one which is dated, and it was written on August 24 (*a. d.* ix. *Kal. Sept.*) In his letter to Tralles he had alluded to his coming martyrdom, to his dread of being seduced by flattery into spiritual pride, to his doubts whether he is really worthy to suffer for Christ, and to his desire for the grace of gentleness, "whereby the prince of this world is brought to nought."[4]

The letter to the Romans is occupied almost exclusively with this topic, and is full of energetic originality and "a sort of sombre fire." Certain Syrians had preceded Ignatius at Rome. They were probably dele-

[1] The Docetae taught that Christ's body, and His human life, were purely in semblance and phantasmal.

[2] Harnack denies this (*Expositor*, March 1886), and with Zahn, reads ὅ τινες ἀρνοῦνται for ὃν in *ad Magn.* 9. In chap. viii. of this letter Ignatius speaks of Jesus Christ, God's eternal word, "*not coming forth from silence.*" This has been regarded by some as a sign of the spuriousness of the letter, as though it referred to the Valentinian Æon, "silence" (*Sigè*). But the "*not*" is probably to be omitted, and the reference to "silence" may be as old as the days of Simon Magus (Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* i. 1, sect. 8).

[3] The appeal is an obvious reminiscence of 1 Cor. xv. 32.

[4] *Ad Trall.* 4. I avail myself generally of Bishop Lightfoot's renderings.

gates from the Church of Antioch, who had been sent to Italy by sea immediately after his condemnation to announce his fate and his speedy arrival. Ignatius is afraid that when the Roman Christians receive the news the more influential among them will exert themselves to procure a remission of his punishment, especially the preservation of his life.[1] He passionately implores them not to do so. Surely they would not rob him of his great opportunity? "For if ye be silent and leave me alone, I am a word of God; but if ye desire my flesh, then shall I be again a mere cry.[2] Nay, grant me nothing more than that I may be poured out a libation to God, while there is yet an altar ready. . . . It is good to set from the world unto God that I may rise unto Him."[3] Why should they begrudge him his crown and his consummation? "I bid all men know that of my own free will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me. I exhort you, be ye not an 'unseasonable kindness' to me. Let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread (of Christ).[4] Rather entice the wild beasts that they may become my sepulchre, and may leave no part of my body behind, so that I may not, when I am fallen asleep, be burden-

[1] He calls the Roman Church ἀξιόθεος, ἀξιοπρεπής, ἀξιομακάριστος, ἀξιέπαινος, ἀξιεπίτευκτος, ἁγίαγνος. We see at once how far we are from the style of St. Paul!

[2] ἐὰν γὰρ σιωπήσητε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ἐγὼ λόγος θεοῦ, ἐὰν δὲ ἐρασθῆτε τῆς σαρκός μου, πάλιν ἔσομαι φωνή. In other words, "his martyrdom alone would make his life an intelligible utterance."

[3] A striking phrase. καλὸν τὸ δῦναι ἀπὸ κόσμου πρὸς θεὸν ἵνα εἰς αὐτὸν ἀνατελῶ (*ad Rom.* 1). In this letter too occurs the famous phrase, "My love has been crucified" (ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται, *ad Rom.* vii.), alluded to by Origen, *Prol.* in *Cant.*

[4] σῖτός εἰμι θεοῦ καὶ δι' ὀδόντων θηρίων ἀλήθομαι, ἵνα καθαρὸς ἄρτος εὑρεθῶ (τοῦ Χριστοῦ), *ad Rom.* 4.

some to any one. Then shall I be truly a disciple of Jesus Christ when the world shall not so much as see my body. Supplicate the Lord for me, that through these instruments I may be found a sacrifice to God. I do not enjoin you as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles, I am a convict; they were free, but I am a slave to this very hour. Yet if I shall suffer, then am I a freed-man of Jesus Christ, and I shall rise free in Him. Now I am learning in my bonds to put away every desire."

After alluding to the trials of his journey with his ten cruel and exacting guards, he adds: "May I have joy of the beasts that have been prepared for me; and I pray that I may find them prompt. Nay, I will entice them that they may devour me promptly,[1] not as they have done to some, refusing to touch them through fear.[2] Yea, though of themselves they should not be willing while I am ready, I myself will force them to it. Bear with me. I know what is expedient for me. Now I am beginning to be a disciple. May nought of things visible and things invisible envy me, that I may attain unto Jesus Christ. Come fire, and iron, and grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushings of my whole body; come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me,—only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ." And so he continues: "Of what value is all the world? Better to die for Christ than to rule over its farthest kingdoms. The pangs of a new birth are upon me. Do not hinder me from living; do not desire my death. Suffer me to

[1] *Ad Rom.* 5, ἃ καὶ κολακεύσω συντόμως με καταφαγεῖν.

[2] The reluctant wild beasts had sometimes to be goaded or enticed to attack their human victims: Euseb. *H. E.* viii. 7. This reluctance is mentioned in the case of Germanicus at Smyrna, of Blandina (id. v. 1), and in the Acts of Tarachus, and others.

receive the pure light, to become a man, to be an imitator of the passion of my God. Do not abet Satan against me. I write to you in the midst of life, yet lusting after death. You will only be showing envy and hatred towards me, not love, if you procure the saving of my life."

We need hardly pause to remark that this impassioned cry for martyrdom is new to Christianity, and marks a new epoch in the history of the world. Myriads of condemned criminals in all ages have written to plead earnestly for life, but Ignatius writes to entreat the glory and blessedness of a martyr's death. No one can fail to admire the strength of his enthusiasm, the heroic certitude of his faith. Yet we must not conceal the truth that this famous letter exercised an influence which was not entirely wholesome.[1] Its abandonment to the luxury of desire for the violent end of which he is "in love" (*ἐρῶν τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν*) is unlike the language and aspiration of our Lord Himself, and contrasts unfavourably with the more sober and self-controlled expressions of St. Paul:[2] "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if to live in the flesh—if *this* is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wot not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for it is very far better; yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."

We honour and reverence this holy martyr, but neither martyrdom nor sainthood raised him to that intensity of spiritual illumination which was granted to the Apostle of the Gentiles. The calm spirit and decision of the Christian Church found it necessary

[1] "Ignace devint ainsi le grand maître de martyre." Renan, *Les Évangiles*, p. 493.

[2] Phil. i. 21-24.

in after days to restrain and reprove that absorbing desire for martyrdom, and that superstitious estimate of its glory and efficacy, which in feebler natures took the form of an unbridled egotism,[1] and was scarcely distinguishable from actual suicide.

His brief stay at Smyrna ended soon after August 24, the date given in his letter to the Romans. Thence he was taken, perhaps by sea, to Alexandria Troas. There he enjoyed another brief halt while awaiting the vessel which was to bear him to the shores of Europe, on the track of St. Paul. Burrhus, the Ephesian delegate, was with him, and here he was joined by two other companions in misfortune, the deacon Philo and Rhaius Agathopus,[2] who brought him the good news that the Church of Antioch was now at peace. He took advantage of this brief rest to write three more letters. They were addressed to the Churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna, which he had so recently visited, and to Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna.

The letters to the two Churches closely resemble the previous letters in their general features. He praises the Bishop of Philadelphia for his quiet temper and imperturbable forbearance, and he warns the flock against division and heresy, urging them to unity in the one Eucharist, and especially bidding them beware of Judaism. He had done his best to promote these ends while he was with them, in spite of the attempt of some to deceive him, and the refusal of the Jews and other schismatic enthusiasts to accept anything which they could not distinctly find in their own archives. He tells them that the priests of the olden dispensation are good, but

[1] See Gieseler, I. i.

[2] Bishop Lightfoot thinks that this may possibly be the Agathopus to whom, long afterwards, Valentinus addressed a letter. *Ignatius*, ii. 280.

that Jesus the High Priest is better. He begs them to send at least one deacon to congratulate the Church of Antioch on its restoration to peace. He thanks those who had been kind to Philo and Agathopus, and prays that those who treated them with dishonour may be redeemed.

This letter to the PHILADELPHIANS is, as Harnack truly says, "the least calm and worst arranged of all the seven epistles," which he attributes partly to the fact that Ignatius was writing in haste, and partly to the pain caused to his mind by the news that Philo and Agathopus had been contemptuously treated by some Christians.

More cordial are his greetings to the Church of SMYRNA. He specially warns the Christians there against the Docetic teachers who denied Christ's humanity, refused to join the common Eucharist, and showed no charity in their lives. He bids them do nothing pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. He thanks them for all their kindness to him; asks them to send "an ambassador of God," to congratulate the Antiochene Church on its renewed peace, and ends with affectionate greetings to special friends.[1]

The last of his letters — that to POLYCARP — is of a more individual character. It consists of pastoral exhortation to a bishop who was much his junior. He urges Polycarp to be watchful and prayerful; to repress heresy; to look after widows; to hold more frequent meetings; not to despise slaves; to encourage the faithfulness and humility alike of married persons and of celibates;[2] to be sober as an athlete of God, and stead-

[1] In this letter is the earliest mention of "*the Catholic Church.*" It next occurs in the Martyrdom of Polycarp. It is used here to express the extension of the Church through the whole world, and has not its later sense of orthodox. The letter also contains the interesting expression, "the virgins that are called widows" (*Smyr.* 13).

[2] He warns the celibates not to pride themselves over the bishop

fast as a smitten anvil.[1] Turning to the laity he bids them to give heed to their bishop, and begs Polycarp to send a deacon to Antioch. He ends hurriedly because his vessel is just about to sail from Troas to Neapolis; and since he will not have time to write to any other churches, he begs Polycarp to send them messengers and letters in his name.[2] He ends with a few salutations, the last being to the Virgin Alkè.

From Neapolis, Ignatius went to Philippi. A letter afterwards written by Polycarp to the Philippians gives us a glimpse of his reception there. His little company was there joined by Zosimus, Rufus, and others who were "diademed," like himself, "with saintly fetters," and were also on their way to punishment or martyrdom. Nothing is known of them, but it has been conjectured that they may have been Christians sent thither by Pliny the Propraetor of Bithynia. We learn from Polycarp's letter that Ignatius had requested the Philippians also to send a letter to Antioch, and they beg the bishop of Smyrna to despatch this letter with his own messengers. They also request him to send them copies of the other letters which Ignatius had written. Polycarp did so, and "it is not improbably to this circumstance that we owe the preservation of the seven letters of Ignatius."

After this all is uncertain. The soldiers probably hurried on in order to reach Rome in time for some anni-

who was perhaps married. That there was such a tendency appears from the fourth canon of the Council of Gangra: "If any celibate for the Lord's sake pride himself over the married, let him be anathema" (A.D. 325).

[1] One of Ignatius's energetic turns of phrase:—*νῆφε ὡς θεοῦ ἀθλήτης στῆθι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ὥς ἄκμων τυπτόμενος* (*ad Polyc.* 1).

[2] He says that these messengers might be called *θεόδρομοι*. So Lucian says that Peregrinus appointed similar messengers called *νεκράγγελοι* and *νερτερόδρομοι*.

versary and its accompanying games. This may have been October 17, the day traditionally assigned for his martyrdom. If so, his journey from Smyrna occupied rather more than a month and a half. It would be easy to repeat stories mentioned in different martyrologies, but their evidence is so confessedly untrustworthy that it is better not to do so.[1] By what route Ignatius reached Rome from Philippi—whether he went to Dyrrachium and then to Beneventum and along the Appian way, or whether by sea from Dyrrachium to Ostia—we cannot tell. The Roman Christians have not preserved a single incident of his martyrdom.[2] We only know that he died under the claws and teeth of lions or tigers in the great Flavian ampitheatre, leaving behind him an immortal name. Ignatius would not himself have wished the details of his witness to be preserved when those of St. Peter and St. Paul have wholly perished. Enough for him to know that his name was written in the Book of Life.[3]

The date of the martyrdom cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. The Colbertine Martyrology fixes it in A.D. 107; Jerome in A.D. 109. The most learned modern enquirers are unable to find data for a final decision.[4]

There was a general belief that his remains were

[1] "The Acts of the Martyrdom of Ignatius are pure inventions. The Roman Acts may not be earlier than the sixth century, and even the Antiochene Acts are not ancient."—Harnack (*Expositor*, Jan. 1886); Lightfoot, ii. 363-472. "Hier gäbe es reichen Stoff um *Ohne Geschichte Geschichte zu machen*," Keim, *Rom. und Christ*, p. 529.

[2] There is no authentic evidence for his martyrdom on December 20, at the *Sigillaria*, a feast which formed part of the Saturnalia.

[3] Volkmar's theory, derived only from John Malalas (sixth century), that he was martyred at *Antioch* on December 20, A.D. 115 has been sufficiently disproved by Zahn and Lightfoot, ii. sect. 1, pp. 434-445.

[4] Bishop Pearson and Clinton, followed by Bishop Wordsworth (*Ch. Hist.* p. 126) fix it in A.D. 115.

transferred to Antioch,[1] where they were said to lie in a martyry near the Daphnitic gate. Thence they were transferred by Theodosius II. to the ancient Temple of Fortune in Antioch itself, which was known thenceforth as "the Church of Ignatius."

The genuineness of the Epistles of Ignatius has been the subject of elaborate critical investigation.

They exist in three forms:—

1. The Longer Greek Recension consisted of fifteen letters, of which the Latin text was published in 1495 and in 1498, and the Greek text by Hartung in 1557. Three of these professed to be the correspondence of Ignatius with St. John and the Virgin, with her answer. They are stupid forgeries. There were, besides, Greek letters to Mary of Cassabola, the Tarsians, Philippians, the Antiochenes, and his successor Hero. This impudent attempt to deceive, which was probably not earlier than the close of the fourth century, was discredited the moment that its gross anachronisms and absurdities were exposed.[2] To dwell on these letters any further would only be to slay the slain.

The seven genuine letters, however,—those known to Eusebius,—were still supposed by many to represent, in this recension, the real Ignatius, although they too abounded with such difficulties that Calvin condemned them *en masse* as "paltry rubbish."[3] Unbiassed criticism was rendered difficult by theological prepossessions.

2. In 1644 a Latin version of the Epistles known

[1] Hieron. *De Vir. ill.* 16.

[2] The interpolator of Ignatius much resembles the interpolator of the "Apostolical Constitutions."

[3] "Nihil istis naeniis putidius."

to Eusebius was found in a SHORTER RECENSION at Oxford by Archbishop Ussher, and in 1644 six Epistles in Greek by Isaac Vossius, and the seventh in 1689 by Ruinart. Since this time the Long Recension has been absolutely doomed, and its one or two defenders were unable to obtain a hearing. Even Roman Catholic controversialists have abandoned a defence which has become entirely untenable. Many illustrious writers, from Pearson (1672) down to Zahn (1873) and Bishop Lightfoot (1885), have successfully vindicated the genuineness and integrity of this Shorter Recension;[1] and have shown that the acute attacks of Daillè (1666) and Baur (1848) are capable of complete refutation.[2]

3. In 1845 Canon CURETON discovered an "Ancient Syriac version of the Epistles of St. Ignatius to St. Polycarp, the Ephesians, and the Romans" among some MSS. which had been recently added to the British Museum. It was at once assumed by many learned writers that these *three abbreviated letters* alone represented the real Ignatius. This doubt may now be regarded as having been set at rest. Zahn, in his *Ignatius von Antiochien*, and still more thoroughly Bishop Lightfoot, in the second part of his volumes on the *Apostolic Fathers*, have shown that the external evidence in favour of the Shorter Recension of the *seven* letters is overwhelming;[3] that the supposed objections to it are

[1] Bishop Lightfoot assigns the forger and interpolator of the Longer Recension to the latter half of the fourth century. Zahn identifies him with Acacius the successor of Eusebius, a Bishop of Caesarea, who died A.D. 366. This would be in accordance with Ussher's proof that "his doctrine is stark Arianism." (Zahn, *Ign. v. Ant.* p. 141. See Lightfoot, ii. sect. ii. p. 780.)

[2] Harnack, on the other hand, identifies the pseudo-Ignatius with the pseudo-Clement. (*Texte und Untersuchungen* ii. 241).

[3] It is fair to add that Professor Harnack, in his review of Bishop

founded on imperfect information; and that the internal evidence in its favour is so powerful as to be nearly conclusive. The three Curetonian letters are now all but universally regarded as a fragmentary epitome, which was meant for edification, and is in some passages not very intelligently accomplished.[1]

The first glance at the Ignatian Epistles raises suspicion, because the phenomena which they present differ so widely from those which we should have expected; but deeper investigation has led to the conviction of their genuineness. They are supported by the

Lightfoot's *Ignatius*, questions the cogency of much of the *external* evidence adduced by Zahn and Lightfoot. Especially he sets aside the relevancy of Lucian's supposed allusions to the Ignatian Letters in his satirical work, *De Morte Peregrini* (about A.D. 165). His belief in their genuineness rests primarily on what he regards as the *proved* genuineness of the Letter of Polycarp (*Expositor* Dec. 1885). If it be assumed that Lucian had seen the Letters of Ignatius, this evidence of their genuineness would be the earliest; but this cannot be regarded as certain.

[1] The manner in which the Syriac MSS. were obtained is interesting. Archbishop Ussher, in his anxiety to throw light on the Ignatian controversy, had invoked the assistance of the Government; and the captains of vessels who traded in the Levant were ordered to bring home what MSS. they could. Then Mr. Huntington, a chaplain at Aleppo, tried to interest the Greek ecclesiastics in the matter, and in 1679 braved all difficulties and visited the Nitrian monasteries. He obtained some MSS., which he placed in the Bodleian. Assemani, going with a commission from Pope Clement XI., brought home from Nitria some forty MSS., which are now in the Vatican. Lastly, in 1838, Archdeacon Tattan brought home forty more MSS., which are now in the British Museum. It was among these that Canon Cureton found the brief Syriac version of the three Letters to Polycarp, the Ephesians, and the Romans. The defect of the epitome is seen in the famous passage about the τρία μυστήρια κραυγῆς, *ad Eph.* 19, where the abbreviator has not understood what are the "three mysteries of crying or proclamation." It is impossible here to give all the arguments in this long controversy. Daillè, in 1666, rejected the Ignatian Letters, and was followed by Larroque, Basnage, Oudin, Baur, Schwegler, Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, Scholten, Pfleiderer. On the other hand, though Neander and Gieseler are doubtful, the genuineness of the Shorter Recension has been maintained by Pearson, Cotelier, Uhlhorn, Hefele, Dressel, Wordsworth, Zahn, Lightfoot, and other eminent scholars.

high and ancient authority of Polycarp and Irenaeus, the Letters of the Churches of Smyrna and of Vienne and Lyons, as well as by Origen and Eusebius. The Docetism which they combat was prevalent at that period, as we learn from the Epistle to the Colossians and the Pastoral Epistles, and it rapidly died away; on the other hand, the letters make no reference to the Quartodeciman controversy, or the new Prophecy of the Montanists, or the heresies of Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus, which would certainly have been alluded to if the letters had been later forgeries.

Docetism, which Ignatius combats, marks the period at which he lived as one in which the Oriental belief in the inherent evil of *matter* made it less easy for men to believe the *Humanity* of Christ than to believe His Divinity.

There are two reasons which made the proved genuineness of the seven letters (even in their shorter form) distasteful to many.

1. One is their exaltation of Episcopacy, which to modern ears sounds unscriptural, irrational, and extravagant.[1] We may say in reply that (α) the language of the martyr comes to us with very different *connotations* from those which correspond to its real meaning. Though we find in Ignatius the growth of the hierarchic system, though in him first appears the clear distinction between the bishop and the presbyter,[2] yet there is in the genuine Ignatius no trace of sacerdotalism. He eulogises Episcopacy under the very peculiar circum-

[1] See *ad Eph.* 6, *ad Trall.* 2, *ad Magn.* 3, *ad Smyrn.* 9, *ad Polyc.* 5, 6, etc. The "bishop" is mentioned in these letters fifty times.

[2] Even in Clement of Rome ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος are still synonyms. See Lightfoot, *Philip.* 93-191. The identity of "bishop" and "presbyter" in the New Testament is now conceded, as it was even by Jerome, Chrysostom, and Theodoret.

stances of the Church of his day in Asia Minor, because he regards it as the sole pledge of unity and of faithful doctrine, the sole means of preventing the Church from being at once split into factions and polluted by heresies. He is not writing a scheme of theology or even of Church government, but hasty occasional letters. Such remarks as "He who does anything without the bishop's knowledge serves the devil" (*ad Smyrn.* 8), and "It is evident that we must look upon the bishop as upon the Lord himself" (*ad Eph.* 6), would be simply absurd and blasphemous if they were extended into universal propositions, wholly apart from the special circumstances under which they were written.

(*b.*) In many marked respects his view of Episcopacy differs from the more developed theories of Irenaeus. (i.) He does not speak of bishops as *instituted* by the Apostles. (ii.) He nowhere represents them as *successors* of the Apostles. (iii.) His bishop is a parochial pastor. "He knows nothing yet of applying the name 'bishop' beyond the realm of the local congregations." (iv.) His testimony is confined to the Churches in Asia. He says nothing to imply that there is a bishop even in Rome, just as Polycarp in his letter says nothing of a bishop at Philippi. (v.) He nowhere disparages other forms of Church government. (vi.) He adopts the very peculiar view that the bishops represent Christ, while the presbyters represent the Apostles. (vii.) He constantly unites the other orders of the clergy with the bishops, and says little or nothing of the obedience or subjection of the whole body of the presbytery. We may add, further (viii.) that the "bishop" of Ignatius is by no means as yet a monarchical bishop,[1] or even a

[1] Harnack l. c. He disagrees with Bishop Lightfoot's view that the presentation of episcopacy in these letters is exactly what we should

diocesan. He is a congregational bishop, and he is not dissevered from his council (*συνέδριον*) of presbyters, whose claim to obedience is also asserted.[1] Even Neander is surprised that the apostolic martyr should have nothing more important to say than "such things about obedience to the bishops." His surprise is shared by most unbiassed readers. But, on the one hand, in early Christian history we must expect surprises, and on the other, allowance must be made for the Oriental rhetoric and personal enthusiasm of the martyr himself. Further, we have every reason to believe that if he had written a century or two later, the very same motive which led him to write these letters would have led him to restrain hierarchic usurpation, and urge the bishops never to act without the co-operation of their presbyters and their people. Of an irresponsible and independent bishop it may safely be said that Ignatius knew as little as of an infallible pope. He lived before the days when the liberties of the Church were so fatally imperilled by ecclesiastical encroachments. If we read the language of the humble martyr with reference only to the time and circumstances under which it was written, it stands as far as possible from the selfassertions of prelatic autocracy.[2] Renan both mistakes and exaggerates when he says "Pour l'auteur de ces curieux écrits l'évêque est toute l'Église."[3] If we read the letters with attentive

expect from other evidence, and thinks that, apart from these letters, we have not a single witness for the existence of monarchical episcopacy so early as the days of Trajan and Hadrian. Ignatius (*ad Rom.* 2) calls himself *τὸν ἐπίσκοπον Συρίας*, but it would militate against the whole tone of his letters to represent this as meaning that he was a metropolitan or diocesan bishop.

[1] *Ad Phil.* 8, *ad Polyc.* 7.

[2] Mossman, *Hist. of the Cath. Ch.* 222-256.

[3] *Les Évangiles*, l. xviii.

care we shall see that what Ignatius yearned for was *unity*, not *episcopacy*. The bishop was regarded as the one safe central authority who in those little communities could be relied on as the protector of apostolical doctrine against the encroachments of Jewish and other heresy;[1] and it is always stated or assumed that he acts in unison with the other presbyters and the deacons.

2. And these considerations may help to smooth down the objection which has arisen from the personality of the writer as it is revealed in these letters. The value of the best of the letters of Ignatius is incomparably beneath that of the humblest and most casual of the New Testament writings. His style is often abrupt, his images are fantastic and obscure, his language unrestrained, his topics reiterated. But why should we expect it to be otherwise? It has been said that the New Testament "is not like a city of modern Europe, which subsides through suburban gardens and groves and mansions into the open country around, but like an eastern city in the desert from which the traveller passes by a single step into a barren waste." The earliest patristic literature cannot indeed be fairly described "as a barren waste," but it is as inferior to the slightest epistle of the New Testament as Clement of Rome and Ignatius are personally inferior in gifts and in power to St. John and St. Paul. If the mere literary value of these letters be small, they resemble in that respect the works of Barnabas, Clement, Papias, and Hermas. In reading the seven letters we see an early martyr as he really was, alike in his grandeur and in his imperfections, and we hear the thoughts

[1] *Ad Eph.* 3-6; *ad Magn.* 3-8; *ad Trall.* 2, 3; *ad Phil.* 2, 3, 4, 7; *ad Smyrn.* 8, 9.

which he actually expressed. We cannot be too thankful for the light which is thus thrown on the history of the early Christian Church.

The theology of Ignatius does not require any extended notice. Docetism, apparently of the Jewish type,[1] is the sole heresy to which he alludes, because it was the only heresy which had at that time fully emerged above the horizon as a source of peril to the Churches with which he was acquainted. He dwells everywhere on the Cross, and Passion, and Resurrection of Christ. The death of Christ was the stimulus to the self-devotion of his life.[2] "My spirit," he says, "is an offscouring of the Cross,"—in other words he feels at once abased by it, and inspired by it to martyrdom. "As for me, my charter (ἀρχεῖα) is Jesus Christ; the inviolable charter is His Cross."[3] "We are the fruits of His most blessed passion."[4] "The Cross is a tree of life, a standard (συσσημὸν) to the ages."[5]

Again, his belief in the Divinity and Humanity of our Lord is absolute. Like other ante-Nicene fathers, he sometimes uses language which, though perfectly harmless and orthodox in intention, would have been avoided in times which demanded the utmost precision of theological accuracy. Later writers, for instance, would have modified such a phrase as that Christ was "God's Word that proceeded from silence,"[6] though Ignatius by no means dreamt of denying the *pre-existence* of

[1] By holding that the body of Christ was only *phantasmal*, Jewish Christians got over the stumbling-block of a *suffering* Messiah.

[2] *Ad Eph.* 18. [3] *Ad Philad.* 8. [4] *Ad Smyrn.* 1. [5] Id. *ib.*

[6] *Ad Magn.* 8, λόγος ἀπὸ σιγῆς προελθὼν seems to be the true reading. Comp. *ad Eph.* 19. The use of the word σιγὴ in this connection was far earlier than the system of Valentinus.

the Word, and is only speaking of Christ's *manifestation.*[1] Nor again would a later writer have used such an expression as "I (shall be) a word of God,"[2] unobjectionable as the phrase is in its own context. Again he speaks of Christ as "generate and ingenerate,"[3] whereas, to the post-Nicene theology, Christ was even in His divinity "*generate*" (γεννητέντα), though "*not made.*" Nicene orthodoxy declared Him to be γεννητός, "begotten," but not γενητός, "one who came into being," "created" (κτιστός). They were obliged to reject the latter phrase, because Arius denied the eternal existence of the Son by saying that "He was not before He came into being" (οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γενηθῆναι).[4]

Ignatius seems to have been acquainted with most of the books of our New Testament canon, though actual *quotations* as apart from resemblances of phraseology are rare. Some of his allusions to facts in the life of Christ are probably derived from tradition.[5]

The Eucharist is prominent in the letters of Ignatius, but it may be doubted whether modern meanings are not read into some of his expressions. For instance, he says to the Ephesians, "If any one be not within the precincts of the altar, he lacketh the bread of God;"[6] and to the Trallians, "He that is within the precincts of the altar is clean;"[7] and to the Philadelphians, "There is one altar."[8] Yet here the word "altar" does *not* mean, and indeed has no direct reference to, the Lord's table. The θυσιαστήριον, as the context shows, is "*the*

[1] As is shown by *ad Magn.* 6, *ad Polyc.* 3.

[2] *Ad Rom.* 2. [3] *Ad Eph.* 7.

[4] See Bishop Lightfoot's masterly excursus on this phrase, pp. 90-94, and his quotation from John of Damascus on the subject.

[5] *Smyrn.* 3 (the Risen Christ to St. Peter), 4 (a saying of Christ, "Near Me, near the fire); *Ephes.* 19 (the star).

[6] *Ad Eph.* 5, ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου. [7] *Ad Trall.* 7.

[8] *Ad Philad.* 4.

enclosure in which the altar stands," as in Rev. xi. 1, and is a Jewish metaphor, meaning "*the court of the congregation.*" It is therefore applied to the Church of Christ. So in Polycarp's letter to the Philippians (c. 4) the widows are called "a *sanctuary* (*θυσιαστήριον*) of God." When Ignatius speaks of "breaking one bread, which (*ὅ*) is the medicine of immortality," the "which" refers, not to the bread, but to the Christian unity symbolised by the Agape and the Eucharist, as is further shown in the fourth chapter of the letter to the Philadelphians.

It is an interesting and important fact which may be directly inferred from the letter to Smyrna—"it is not lawful without the bishop to baptize or *to hold a love-feast*"—that in the days of Ignatius the Eucharist still formed part of the Agape.[1]

"There is not throughout these letters," says Bishop Lightfoot, "the slightest tinge of sacerdotal language in reference to the Christian ministry. The only passage in which a priest or high priest is mentioned at all is *Philad.* 9, 'The priests likewise are good, but the High Priest (Christ) is better.' Here a careless exegesis has referred the priests to the Christian ministry; but the whole context resists this reference. The writer is contrasting the Old Dispensation with the New. He allows the worth of the former, but claims superiority for the latter. Plainly, therefore, by the priests here is meant the Levitical priesthood, the mediators of the Old Covenant; while the High Priest is Christ, the Mediator of the New.'"[2]

[1] Lightfoot's *Ignat.* i. 386. [2] Id. i. 382.

As Ignatius was the most celebrated of the early martyrs, we may here say a word about the relations of the Empire to the Church.

Christianity had practically to endure three centuries of persecution. Adopting the convenient division of a recent historian, we may say that the Emperors of the first four centuries may be divided into

The Julian and Claudian, B.C. 30—A.D. 68.
The Flavian Emperors, A.D. 69-96.
The Adoptive Emperors, 96-192.
The Barrack Emperors, 192-284.
The Partnership Emperors, 284-323.
The Theologian Emperors, 323-363.[1]

Of the Julian and Claudian Emperors we have already seen that Nero was the leader in the terrible work of persecution, and that his example was followed by Domitian even against the members of the Imperial family. Of the Adoptive Emperors, Trajan, Antoninus, and M. Aurelius, all had their share in the guilt of bloodshed. Of the Barrack Emperors no fewer than eighteen were recognised at Rome, besides a number of shadowy, shifting usurpers in the provinces, between the death of Severus and the accession of Diocletian. They owed their existence to the Praetorian Guards or other soldiers. Severus, Maximin, Valerian, and Decius were conspicuous for their severity against converts and bishops. Of the Partnership Emperors, Diocletian, Maximian, and Galerius deliberately attempted to extirpate Christianity, and Maximin Daza was prepared, if it had been possible, to follow in their steps. After the accession of Constantine, no persecution of Christians as such was any longer possible; but of the Theological Emper-

[1] Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, i. 5-25.

ors, Constantius and Valens were determined and intolerant Arians, as was the Empress Justina. Their brains were confused with multitudes of creeds, controversies and councils, but they did not shrink from actual persecution of the Catholics. Julian was a convinced Pagan, and though he annoyed and repressed the Christians as much as he could, it would be unfair to reckon him in the list of persecutors. He made no enduring impression upon his age. "Once more had the full wave of the Imperial power dashed against the calm figure of the Christ, and once more it retired, not a fold of the seamless vesture disarranged."

It has often been a subject of astonishment that "the mild tolerance of Paganism" should have been exchanged for an implacable hatred when confronted with Christianity. But the reason is not far to seek. Between the nature and aims of the State and of the Church there was of necessity an irreconcilable hostility. Christ came to proclaim "a kingdom"[1] which was meant in due time to embrace the whole world. Two stories, told by Hegesippus, illustrate the jealousy aroused by Christian preaching.[2] He says that Symeon, son of Clopas, Bishop of Jerusalem, was crucified because he was of the race of David; and that the descendants of Jude, known as the *Desposyni*, or "relations of the Lord," were summoned into the presence of Domitian, and questioned as to their claims, being only dismissed with contempt because it was found that they were peasants who ploughed a few paternal acres, and whose hands were horny with labour. As early as the days of Justin it was necessary for the Christian Apologists to remove the misapprehension which arose from this political suspicion.[3]

[1] Matt. iii. 2, iv. 17, xiii. 38. Acts i. 3, viii. 12, xvii. 7, xx. 25, etc.
[2] *Ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* iii. 20-32. [3] Justin Mart. *Apol.* i. 11.

But still "the two Empires of Christ and of the world had nothing in common. . . . In principle, in mode of action, in sanctions, in scope, in history, they offer an absolute contrast. The Roman Empire was essentially based on positive law; it was maintained by force; it appealed to outward well-doing; it aimed at producing external co-operation or conformity. The Christian Empire was no less essentially based on faith; it was propagated and upheld by conviction; it lifted the thoughts and working of men to that which was spiritual and eternal; it strove towards the manifold exhibition of one common life."[1]

Dr. Westcott has admirably pointed out the solution of the problem by which the early Apologists were so much perplexed—namely, why the pure faith and holy life of the Christians should alone be singled out for savage persecution. It was because Christianity was not content to be one of many forms of religion, but was universal, absolute, aggressive.

Polytheism is national. Even the twelve tables had legislated against the introduction of foreign superstitions. At the beginning of the Empire, Maecenas had strongly advised Augustus to punish "atheism," superstition, and religious innovation.[2] The Romans never hesitated to recognise the claims and rights of local religions, but they required all Romans to pay outward respect to the established cult. They did not object to the co-ordination of new deities, but they were indignant at the ostentatious supersession of the old. "Gladly," says Mr. Hodgkin, "would they have consigned Christianity

[1] Westcott, *Ep. of St. John*, p. 240 (Essay on *The Church and the World*). I have in the following paragraph epitomised his remarks.

[2] Dion. Cass. lii. 36. Marcus Aurelius expressed the finest sentiments of toleration. ("Who can change the opinions of men? And without change of sentiments what do you make but reluctant slaves and hypocrites?"). But he looked on the Christians as traitors to the State.

to the peaceful Pantheon of the tolerated religions in which already the worship of Astarte and Elagabalus, of Isis and Serapis, flourished happily side by side. But they perceived—the wisest Emperors the most clearly—that this was a religion which would have all or nothing, and they hunted it into the catacomb to bar it from the throne." They were quite content that philosophers should disbelieve, and satirists jeer at, and actors ridicule the current mythology, but they looked upon it as monstrous that any one should claim supremacy for another form of faith. Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus were sceptics about the national religion, but they always paid it external reverence. Neither agnostic philosophers, nor literary scorners, nor theatric buffoons were actuated by the deadly earnestness and burning indignation which brought a Christian into antagonism with the existing order of things in almost every action of his life. This was why the Christians, as Justin says, were "unjustly hated and injuriously treated by all men." Christianity in fact challenged persecution, and the persecutions became directly political when the Christians rejected with horror the universal deification—for it was little less—of the reigning Emperors. No Christian could accept the purely official aspect of the Imperial *apotheosis*. And their horror was mingled with inexpressible loathing when they saw temples reared and altars smoke in honour of the deity of an unhappy minion, on whom the worst vices of an Emperor had conferred the title of a god. Hadrian by his *apheosis* of Antinous (A.D. 133) caused in all honest minds a reaction which dealt a blow at the last surviving credit of Paganism; and as he also practically destroyed Judaism by his fierce suppression of the revolt of Barcochba and by his degradation of Jerusalem into the paltry colony of

Ælia Capitolina (A.D. 135), the impulse which he unwittingly gave to Christianity was of supreme importance.[1] He irretrievably disgraced one of its rivals, and ruthlessly obliterated the other.

And all this was providentially ordained. Men were not to be suffered to sink into the laxity of compromise, and to suppose that they could serve two masters. Roman civilisation and true Christianity could not in the long run exist side by side. Christianity, as we shall have occasion to see, helped undoubtedly to weaken and destroy the Empire, and it was necessary that this great task should be accomplished before she could work on the heathen blood of the barbarian invaders, and fashion them into the new world of Christendom.

And surely it was nothing short of miraculous that such a work should have been accomplished by agents so weak and poor. No one has stated the argument more forcibly than Cardinal Newman. "They are weavers," says Celsus, "shoemakers, fullers, illiterate clowns;" and he calls their faith a barbarous dogma. "Fools, low-born fellows," says Trypho.[2] "The greater part of you," says Caecilius, "are worn with want, cold, toil, and famine; men collected from the lowest dregs of the people; ignorant credulous women," "unpolished fools, illiterate, ignorant even of the sordid acts of life; they do not understand even civil matters, how can they understand divine?" "They have left their tongs, anvils, and mallets to preach about the things of heaven," says Libanius. "They deceive women, servants, and slaves," says Julian. The author of *Philopatris* speaks of them as "Poor creatures, blocks, withered old fellows, men of downcast

[1] *Apol.* i. 1.

[2] Comp. Diogn. c. 5 (πτωχεύουσι), and see Orig. *c. Cels.* iii. 44, 54, Athenag. c. 11, Tatian, c. 33, γυναῖκες, μειράκια, παρθένοι, κ.τ.λ. Min. Fel. 5, etc., "imperiti, impoliti, rudes, agrestes."

and pale visages." As for their religion, it had the reputation popularly, according to various Fathers, of being an anile superstition, the discovery of old women, a joke, a madness, an infatuation, an absurdity, a fanaticism.[1]

Yet in spite of this obscurity and ignorance of its members, Justin and Tertullian are alone sufficient to prove to us that the Christians, though but a people of yesterday, had filled the civilised world. "Hesterni sumus," says Tertullian, "et vestra omnia implevimus."[2] Consider the catacombs of Rome alone. They were used exclusively by Christians. They did not begin to be used till the close of the first century; they ceased to be used at the beginning of the fifth; yet in those three centuries of Rome alone the subterranean galleries in which the Christians buried their dead may contain—so Father Marchi conjectures—from seven to eight millions of graves.[3]

We must not, however, attach too much importance to the violent and insolent sneers of Pagans. Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, and many Gnostic teachers, had been Platonic philosophers. Pantaenus had been a Stoic; Quadratus, Melito, Aristides, Miltiades, Apollonius, Theophilus, and other Christian writers, were men of learning and position. We learn from many incidental allusions, that from the first Christianity numbered among its converts the rich and the wise as well as the poor and simple.[4] And this becomes the more remarkable when we remember the tremendous sacrifice involved. The force of custom, the charm of Pagan literature, the

[1] For the most elaborate indictments of Christians by Pagans, see Min. Felix, *Octav.* 8, 12; Tert. *Apol. passim*, Arnob. i. 36.

[2] Tert. *Apol.* 37.

[3] Newman, *Gram. of Assent*, p. 471.

[4] See proofs in Keim, *Rom. u. d. Christenthum*, p. 417.

reverence due to the opinions of former generations, the ties of family, the haughty disdain of philosophy for the new Eastern religion, the ban of law, the loyalty to the State, the dread of death and frightful tortures, the fearful calumnies against Christians which were universally believed,—all these were influences of immense force against any acceptance of a faith which was stigmatised as the abject worship of a crucified malefactor. How irresistible must have been the force of evidence which nevertheless triumphed over all these influences combined![1]

Can we wonder at this triumph when we consider the courage and rapture with which the gospel inspired its martyrs? Let any one read the deaths of Polycarp or Pothinus the aged bishops; of Blandina the girl-slave and Potamiaena the fair virgin; of the noble youths Epipodius and Epagathus and Germanicus; of the young deacon St. Lawrence; of the young mother Felicitas; of the young and noble Perpetua; of the aged Apollonia; of the boys of fifteen, Ponticus in Lyons, Dioscurus in Alexandria; of Barulas, the little boy of seven years old, and Hilarianus, the young lad of tenderest years in Numidia.[2] He may then measure the power of the conviction which made the strength of weakness irresistible. "Whence came this tremendous spirit," asks Cardinal Newman, "scaring, nay, offending the fastidious criticism of our delicate days? Does Gibbon think to sound the depths of the eternal ocean with the tape and measuring-rod of his merely literary philosophy?" "It is indeed difficult to enter into the feelings of irritation and fear, of contempt and amaze-

[1] Keim, *Rom. u. d. Christenthum*, p. 416.

[2] See *Acta Saturnini, etc. in Africa* (Baluz, *Miscell.* ii.); Neander, i. 208.

ment, which were excited, whether in the town populace or in the magistrates, in the presence of conduct so novel, so unvarying, so absolutely beyond their comprehension. The very young and the very old, the child, the youth in the heyday of his passions, the sober man of middle age, maidens and mothers of families, boors and slaves as well as philosophers and nobles, solitary confessors and companies of men and women—all these were seen equally to defy the powers of darkness to do their worst. In this strange encounter it became a point of honour with the Roman to break the determination of his victim, and it was the triumph of faith when his most savage expedients for the purpose were found to be in vain. The martyrs shrank from suffering like other men, but such natural shrinking was incommensurable with apostasy. No intensity of torture had any means of affecting what was a mental conviction; and the sovereign thought in which they had lived was their sovereign support and consolation in their death. In them the prospect of wounds and loss of limbs was not more terrible than it is to the combatant of this world. They faced the implements of torture as the soldier takes his post before the enemy's battery. They cheered and ran forward to meet his attack, and, as it were, dared him, if he would, to destroy the numbers who were ready to close up the foremost rank, as their comrades who had filled it fell. And when Rome at last found she had to deal with a host of Scaevolas, then the proudest of earthly sovereignties, arrayed in the completeness of her material resources, humbled herself before a power which was founded on a mere sense of the Unseen."[1]

The victory then was due in no small measure to the splendid courage and invincible endurance of the mar-

[1] *Gram. of Assent*, p. 476.

tyrs. "That serfs bound to the clod, female slaves old and ugly, should have a something within, indefinable and intangible, which made them refuse to bow down to the image of the mighty Caesar, lord of a hundred legions, or to put a few grains of frankincense in a censer, was too absurd;" and yet it was just this "sheer obstinacy" which arrested the attention of thinking men, and produced not a few conversions. Each martyr not only aimed at winning his own glorious crown, but was assured—and history has set her seal to the assurance, that

> "'The trial, fiery-fierce, but fleet,
> Would, from his little heap of ashes, lend
> Wings to the conflagration of the world,
> Which Christ awaits ere he makes all things new.'"

II

ST. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA, BISHOP AND MARTYR

ΊΣΧΥΕ Πολύκαρπε καὶ ΄ΑΝΔΡΊΖΟΥ.—*Mart. Polyc.* 9.

Of Polycarp the Elder, as of Ignatius the martyr, but little is really known.[1]

There is indeed a *Life of Polycarp* ascribed to Pionius, but it only became current at the close of the fourth century, and is so entirely unauthentic that we cannot attribute the least certainty even to those of its statements which are not demonstrably false. According to this life he was a slave-boy from the East, and Callisto, a wealthy lady of Smyrna, was warned by an angel in a vision to go and purchase him. She did so, and he became steward in her household; but he gave away all her goods to the poor, and was only saved from dismissal by a miracle which replenished the empty storehouses.[2] When she died she left him her property, and, being a holy man, and mighty in the Scriptures, he became a

[1] Of Editions of *The Epistle and Martyrdom of Polycarp* it will be sufficient to name those of Jacobson (4th ed. 1866), Zahn (1876), Funk (1878), and Lightfoot (1885).

[2] A similar story is found in the lives of other saints as, for instance, Sta. Zita.

deacon—preached, wrote, and was elected as a successor to Bucolus in the bishopric of Smyrna, after being marked out for the office by many visions. Then follows a narration of the miracles which he wrought during his episcopate.

Setting all this aside, we can only say that we know nothing of his parentage, but may fairly infer from his own language that he had been a Christian from his earliest youth. There is nothing in the name Polycarp to give us any indication either of his rank or country. He was probably born about the year 70, so memorable as the year in which Jerusalem fell. It is certain that he had been a hearer of St. John, and it is probable that during his youth and early manhood he must also have seen and known St. Andrew at Ephesus, and St. Philip in the neighbouring Hierapolis. He may also have conversed with the little known Aristion and "John the Elder," if, which is highly uncertain, there existed such a person, and if he be other than a confused spectre of the Apostle himself. He appears to have possessed a house and farm and slaves of his own, and there may be some germ of truth in the statement that he was originally a Syrian slave, and had become possessed of means. It seems probable that he was by choice a celibate.

St. John died, so far as we can ascertain, in extreme old age, about A.D. 100. Polycarp may have enjoyed some intercourse with him till he was a young man of thirty. In later life it was his chief delight to recall this intercourse; and the length of his own life providentially continued the memory of the most essential elements of gospel truth. Papias was probably his fellow disciple when he was a hearer of St. John.[1]

[1] Iren. v. 33 § 4. But Eusebius (*H. E.* iii. 39) thinks that the real teacher of Polycarp and Papias was the (apocryphal ?) "John the Elder."

According to Tertullian it was St. John who appointed Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna,[1] and Irenaeus says that he received his appointment from the Apostles. We possess but one of Polycarp's writings—his letter to the Philippians, and on four occasions only does his life become visible to us.[2]

1. The first of these occasions is the visit of Ignatius to Smyrna on his way to martyrdom. We have already seen that Polycarp received him with kindness and reverence, and that the martyr learned to love the young bishop.[3] He was comforted by him in all things,[4] and was thankful to have known him.[5] After reaching Troas, Ignatius wrote to him in a tone of fatherly counsel, giving him much advice as to the manner in which he should bear himself. He said to him, "Ask for larger wisdom than thou hast, be thou more diligent than thou art;" and he bade him to stand firm as an anvil when it is smitten, since "it is the part of a great athlete to receive blows and to conquer."

In the hurry of his departure from Troas, Ignatius entrusted to Polycarp the task of sending delegates to congratulate the Church of Antioch on the close of the persecution, and of requesting other Churches to do the same. At Philippi he made a similar request, and this led the Philippians to write and ask Polycarp to send on their letter by his own delegates to Antioch. The answer of Polycarp is still extant, and with it he sends them copies of the Letters of Ignatius, and enquires of them for later intelligence as to the martyr's fate. The date of this correspondence is about A.D. 110, when Polycarp was perhaps forty years old.

[1] Tert. *De Praescr.* 32.

[2] It is needless to repeat the miraculous fictions of the Pseudo-Pionius which figure in many lives of Polycarp.

[3] Ign. *ad Eph.* 21.

[4] *Ad Magn.* 15.

[5] *Ad Polyc.* 1.

2. The next glimpse of Polycarp which we obtain is furnished by the famous letter of Irenaeus to Florinus.

It would have been deeply interesting if we could have learnt something of the intervening years, and been told whether Polycarp ever had any intercourse with Melito or Polycrates, or had in later years seen Justin Martyr or Clement of Alexandria during their visits to Asia. All this, however, must remain uncertain. Florinus and Irenaeus had both been pupils of Polycarp, but Florinus lapsed into heresy. Even as a youth he seems to have had one eye on the world, for Irenaeus's letter tells us that, while he was trying to stand well with Polycarp, he was, at the same time, "faring prosperously in the royal court."[1] Irenaeus, who, in A.D. 177, became Bishop of Lyons, writes to rebuke his old friend, and appeals to their common reminiscences, still so vivid, of the aged Bishop of Smyrna. "I can tell," he writes, "the very place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out, and his comings in, and his manner of life, and his personal appearance, and the discourses which he held before the people, and how he would describe his intercourse with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and how he would relate their words. And whatsoever things he had heard from them about the Lord, and about His miracles, and about His teaching, Polycarp, as having received them from eye-witnesses of the life of the Word, would relate altogether in accordance with the Scriptures. To these things I used to listen at the time with attention, by God's mercy,

[1] The expression ἐν τῇ βασιλικῇ αὐλῇ is not sufficiently definite to lead to any conclusion as to the date referred to. Bishop Lightfoot says, "It might be anywhere between A.D. 135 and A.D. 150." Possibly "the royal court" may only mean the court of the Proconsul.

which was bestowed upon me, noting them down not on paper but in my heart; and constantly, by the grace of God, I ruminate upon them faithfully."

So far the sketch is a very beautiful one. We seem to see the old man, seated on the terraced hillside of Mount Pagus, over Smyrna, gazing on the enclosing mountains and the sparkling gulf, while he talked tranquilly to his young pupils about inestimable memories, so that "an echo of Galilee thus made itself heard at the distance of a hundred and twenty years, on the shores of another sea."[1]

What follows gives us a less attractive picture.

"I can testify in the sight of God," says Irenaeus, "that if that blessed and apostolic Elder had heard anything of this kind" (alluding to the novel teaching of Florinus) "he would have cried out and stopped his ears, and would have said, after his wont, '*Oh good God, for what times hast thou kept me that I should endure these things!*' and would have fled from the very place where he was sitting or standing when he heard such words. And this, indeed, can be shown from his letters which he wrote either to the neighbouring churches for their confirmation or to certain of the brethren for their warning and exhortation."

Irenaeus is fonder of stories of this kind than we should have expected from his pacific disposition; but as he makes statements which can be shewn to be decidedly inaccurate, we may hope that his story of the old bishop's vehemence is a little coloured by his own prepossessions.[2] It is he who gives the altogether dubious, and probably quite apocryphal story of St. John

[1] Renan, *L'Église Chrétienne*, p. 438.

[2] "Il devait nous transmettre l'image souvent faussée, mais à quelques égards très-vivante du dernier monde apostolique."—Renan, l.c.

and Cerinthus.[1] He tells us in the same passage another story of Polycarp in which the same spirit appears. On the occasion of the bishop's visit to Rome shortly before his martyrdom, the heretic Marcion met him in the street, and Polycarp ignored him altogether—in modern phrase, "cut him dead." "Don't you recognise me?" asked Marcion. "Yes," said Polycarp, "I recognise—I recognise the first-born of Satan."[2]

This story is possibly authentic. Polycarp uses the phrase "the first-born of Satan" in his letter to the Smyrnaeans, which must have been written soon after the martyrdom of Ignatius, whereas this incident, if it be true, must have occurred about thirty-six years later.[3] But Irenaeus tells us, in the passage just quoted, that Polycarp was in the habit of reiterating the same phrases.[4]

Some may be pleased with these stories. To me the expressions of Polycarp do not seem to accord with the bearing of our Lord towards either sinners or heretics. Irenaeus, it is true, quotes Tit. iii. 10 as a justification, but we read of no "first or second admonition" administered by Polycarp to Marcion, and he certainly did not keep the precept, "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." On the other hand, the story is no doubt a mere fragmentary allusion, and

[1] *Haer.* iii. 3, 4. I have given my reasons for attaching no importance to this story in *Early Days of Christianity*. Irenaeus does not even profess to report it *secondhand*, for he only says that "there were *some* who had heard Polycarp tell the story."

[2] Moscow MS. of the *Mart. Polyc. ad fin.* ἐπιγινώσκω, ἐπιγινώσκω τὸν πρωτότοκον τοῦ Σατανᾶ.

[3] Taking Mons. Waddington's date for Polycarp's martyrdom, A.D. 155, which is now generally accepted.

[4] See Bishop Lightfoot, p. 434. It is true that Irenaeus leaves the date of his story indefinite (ποτε), but he probably supposed that the meeting between Polycarp and Marcion took place in Rome, which he has mentioned just before.

we must remember all the circumstances of that tumultuous and anxious time. Certainly he who should go about to imitate this style of address and protest might easily become guilty of ignorant dogmatism and coarse intolerance.[1] These methods do not conciliate erring souls, but only make the truth repellent, and put stumbling-blocks in the way of its acceptance.

Without attempting to judge Polycarp, we must recall the immeasurably higher authority of St. Paul. "He," says Polycarp, "who wrests the words of the Lord according to his own pleasure, and saith there is no resurrection and judgment, is the *first-born of Satan.*" Certainly the heresy which he there describes is of the gravest character; yet when St. Paul speaks of the same heresy, he only asks with gentle forbearance and dignity: "Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" and then combats the error, not by insult and denunciation, but by calm and irrefragable reasoning. "To speak the truth in love" is a safer rule, and a better example; and so much was surely due to Marcion in whom even his adversaries recognised a man of strict self-denial and unimpeachable character.[2] Many a Christian unexceptionably orthodox was ten times more a "first-born of Satan" than was the morally blameless though erring Marcion.

3. Far more beautiful is the impression which we derive from the general bearing of Polycarp during his visit to Anicetus, the Bishop of Rome.[3] He was received with

[1] "Ce ton d'assurance a sur les gens de demiculture une grande efficacité."—Renan.

[2] See even Tert. *Marc.* i. 1, 29; iv. 11.

[3] Irenaeus does not say why Polycarp visited Rome, but he speaks of the two bishops as *μικρὰ σχόντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους* (Euseb. *H. E.* v. 24).

all the distinction due to his age and character, and it is said that in this visit he won many heretics back to the faith. Valentinus and Marcion had numerous followers in Rome; and Cerdon and Tatian—both of whom erred from the faith—may possibly have been there at the same time.[1] It was the object of Polycarp to talk with Anicetus about various points of difference between them; perhaps to discuss especially the proper time for keeping Easter.[2] Polycarp and the Churches of Asia, following the example of St. John, kept the day of the Crucifixion on Nisan 14, whatever the day of the week might be. Anicetus, on the other hand, like his predecessors and the Churches of the West, always observed a Friday as the anniversary of the Crucifixion, and a Sunday as that of the Resurrection. Each could quote high authority and abundant precedents, and neither the Bishop of Rome nor the Bishop of Smyrna felt justified in altering a custom which they had respectively received from the traditions of their fathers. But though each of them retained his own opinion and his own practice, and though, in the imperfection of earthly churches, differences of ritual observance often produce even deadlier quarrels than differences of doctrine, yet the two bishops continued to be friends. Anicetus conferred on Polycarp the highest honour in his power by allowing him to celebrate the Eucharist in his presence in his own church.[3] Irenaeus relates this happy incident in a letter

Eusebius *implies* that it was to discuss the question about Easter (*H. E.* iv. 14), and Jerome states this as a fact (*De Vir. ill.* 17).

[1] He *may* also have seen at Rome, Hermas, Hegesippus, and Justin Martyr.—Lightfoot, p. 435.

[2] "Anicetus was the seventh Bishop of Rome, since Polycarp had been set over the Church of Smyrna."—Robertson, i. 30.

[3] παρεχώρησεν εὐχαριστίαν. "Ces hommes ardents étaient pleins d'un sentiment trop passionnée pour faire reposer l'unité des âmes sur l'uniformité des rites."—Renan.

to Pope Victor,[1] who, forty years later, arrogantly excommunicated the Eastern Churches for persevering in a custom for which they claimed, without challenge, the authority of St. John.

4. And now Polycarp had reached extreme old age, though his natural force was unabated. Nothing further of him is known except the story of his martyrdom, which is so familiar that I will relate it in the fewest possible words.

At the great Pagan festivals there was always a possibility of the recrudescence of heathen animosity against the growing influence of the Christians. This seems to have been the case in Smyrna at the annual games after Polycarp's return from Rome. The Asiarch, Philip of Tralles, had celebrated these games with unusual magnificence, and the conflict of heathen and Christian feeling thus aroused had caused the doom of eleven Christians who were thrown to the wild beasts. These Christians had been dragged into peril by the flaring enthusiasm of a Phrygian named Quintus, who in the hour of trial was terrified by the wild beasts and alone apostatised. His terrible failure confirmed the Asiatic Christians in their conviction that it was wrong and contrary to gospel teaching to *thrust* themselves into the glory of martyrdom. But the heroic endurance of the martyrs — especially of the young Germanicus, who, in a transport of enthusiasm, dragged to himself the reluctant lion—had still further excited the populace. They were inflamed with the lust for blood, and raised the ominous cry of Αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους, "Away with the atheists!" shouting especially for Polycarp. Infinite as was the attractiveness of the crown of martyrdom, Polycarp, like many of the wiser Christians,

[1] Preserved by Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 24.

felt that it would be an act of unworthy fanaticism to throw away his life. He therefore retired to a country farm, and thence to a little cottage. His place of concealment was betrayed by a poor slave lad, who was unable to resist the agony of the torture applied to him. The police found him in the upper room of a cottage, sitting at his evening meal, for he did not think it right to made any further effort to escape. It is pleasant to read that he ordered refreshments to be given to his captors, and that they allowed him an hour for prayer. For two hours he stood pouring forth his fervent supplications for all the Church and all the world. He was then mounted on an ass and led to the city. On his way he was met by Herodes, the captain of the police,[1] the brother of Alkè, and by his father Niketes. Taking Polycarp into their chariot, they entreated him to say "Caesar is Lord," and asked him what harm could possibly be done by throwing on the altar a few grains of incense. Polycarp simply replied that he would not do so. He added no more because he knew that to reason with them was impossible. The heathen could never be made to understand that such a concession would involve nothing less than a guilty compromise with idolatry.[2] Irritated by what they regarded as a stupid obstinacy, they brutally pushed the old man from the chariot. In the fall he bruised his leg, but walked on as though nothing had happened.

He was led to the stadium, which was made to serve the frightful purpose of an amphitheatre, and of which the remains still exist. No sooner was his white head

[1] ὁ εἰρήναρχος. *Mart. Polyc.* 6.

[2] Comp. Theop.; *ad Autol.* i. 11., ἐρεῖς μοι Διά τι οὐ προσκυνεῖς τὸν βασιλέα;

seen by the mob than a mighty shout arose, in the midst of which the Christians heard, or thought they heard, a clear voice which said, "Polycarp, be strong, and play the man." The proconsul, Titus Statius Quadratus, a humane and philosophic governor, was anxious to save him. He urged him to pity his white hairs, to swear by the genius of Caesar, and to cry "Away with the atheists!" The old man raised his eyes to heaven, and waving his hands towards the multitude, he solemnly said, "Away with the atheists." The story is characteristic of his habitual sternness of mind, and possibly it was this fervid intolerance of error, this disdainful attitude towards heresy, which had rendered him an object of hatred to the Jews and Pagans of his native city. "Swear," said the Proconsul, "and I will set thee free. Revile Christ." "Eighty and six years have I served Him," answered the martyr, "and He hath done me no wrong. How then can I speak evil of my King, who saved me?"

In vain the Proconsul urged him. He cut short the examination by telling him plainly, "I am a Christian." "If," he said, "you wish to hear what Christianity is, give me a day, and listen." "Persuade the people," said Quadratus. "No," answered the martyr; "I will speak to *you*, for we are bidden to reverence those in authority. But"—and here once more we have a touch of the disdain which seems to have made him hated—"I do not consider them worthy that I should defend myself before them."

The Proconsul was obliged to announce by his herald that Polycarp had professed himself a Christian. Then rose a yell of Jews and Pagans—"Away with the father of the Christians, the puller-down of our gods!" and the blood-drunken multitude shouted to the Asiarch to let

a lion loose on him.[1] But the sports were over, and Philip refused. Then they clamoured that he should be burnt. The Asiarch yielded, and so was fulfilled the intimation which the martyr had received three days before, when he had dreamed that his pillow was on fire. In recounting the dream he had said, "I must be burnt alive."

It was a Sabbath, and therefore a Jewish holiday. The Jews spitefully collected wood and fagots, and the old man, accustomed to the eager offices of his disciples, tried with difficulty to unrobe himself and take off his shoes. He entreated the executioners not to nail him to the stake, so he was bound with cords, and in his last prayer thanked God for his approaching sacrifice.

The fire was lit, but overarched him like a bellying sail. In the midst of it his body shone like gold or silver,[2] while to the imagination of the Christians it seemed as if a fragrant odour was diffused around him. As he remained unburnt, the *confector* was ordered to plunge a dagger into his side.[3] Thereupon the blood gushed out and quenched the flames. The Jews, under the pretext that the Christians would worship him, begged that his body might be burned, and Niketes supported their petition; but the Christians were allowed to carry away the half-calcined bones, "more precious

[1] The Asiarchs presided at the games. See Acts xix. 31.

[2] Eusebius omits the homely comparison ὡς ἄρτος ὀπτώμενος, "like a loaf in the oven."

[3] In the Letter of the Smyrnaeans we read that when the executioner (κομφέκτωρ) stabbed Polycarp there came forth "[a *dove* and] a quantity of blood." But Eusebius, Rufinus, and even Nicephorus, knew nothing of the words περιστέρα καὶ, and if they are not a corruption for περὶ στύρακα, "about the sword-haft" (Wordsworth), or ἐπ ἀριστέρᾳ, "on the left" (Le Moyne), they may, as Lightfoot thinks, have been interpolated by the pseudo-Pionius. They are quite in accordance with early Christian symbolism.

to them than gold or gems," and they met year by year at his martyry to celebrate the day of death, which was kept as the true birthday of their sainted bishop. This martyrdom took place, as far as can be ascertained, on 23d February A.D. 155,[1] and the persecution seems then to have ended. And thus was fulfilled the prophetic message of St. John in the Apocalypse to the angel of the Church in Smyrna.[2] It is indeed improbable that the angel means the bishop, but it is true of the Church that the devil cast some of them into prison, and caused them tribulation "ten days," and that false Jews, the synagogue of Satan—a body at all times powerful in Smyrna—were chief agents in the reviling, and chief instigators of the wrath.

This celebrated narrative is derived from a letter of the Smyrnaeans, addressed, in the first instance, to the little Church of Philomelium, but intended for dissemination through all the Churches.[3] Irenaeus, in a book no longer extant, is said to have narrated that he was then residing in Rome, and that he heard a voice as of a trumpet saying to him "*Polycarp has been martyred.*" This is one of the incidents — marvellous rather than miraculous—which have gathered round the

[1] Waddington, *Fastes des prov. Asiat.* i. 219-221. M. Waddington's arguments have satisfied Zahn, Renan, Hilgenfeld, and Lightfoot.

[2] Rev. iii. 8-10.

[3] The genuineness of this letter of the Smyrnaeans has been fiercely assailed in recent times, but it is accepted even by Renan (*L'Église Chrétienne*, 462) and Hilgenfeld; and the proofs offered by Bishop Lightfoot (pp. 588-628) are unanswerable. The hinted parallelism between the martyrdom and the Crucifixion is just what we should expect, and is often purely subjective. The miraculous element hardly exceeds the colouring of natural accidents, and admits of many illustrations. These wonders are narrated with perfect simplicity, and readily sprang from the credulity of a superstitious age, in narrating events by which the eye-witnesses were deeply stirred. Incidental allusions stamp the narrative as being contemporary. The objections of Donaldson (*Apost. Fathers*, p. 198) are far from valid.

record of the martyr's end. Some of them may be exaggerated and coloured by the excited emotions of the spectators,[1] but there is every reason to believe that the story, in its main outline, is rigidly historical, and there is not one of the unusual events connected with it which may not have been based on literal fact.

Irenaeus says that Polycarp wrote many letters. His only extant writing is the Letter to the Philippians. It is a very simple production, addressed to the Church of Philippi in answer to their request to send them copies of any letters of Ignatius, and to forward a letter of theirs to the Church of Antioch. He has not yet heard of the death of Ignatius, and asks them for any further details about him. He speaks with high praise of the Church, and alludes to St. Paul's love for them and his "letters" to them.[2] He rejoices that they have been permitted to show such kindness to Ignatius, and to witness his bright example, as well as those of Zosimus and Rufus. There was, however, one sad event to which he alludes. Valens, a presbyter of the Church, and his wife, had in some way or other been guilty of greed or fraud. Polycarp alludes with sorrow to this scandal, but urges the Philippians to deal forbearingly with them, and prays that the Lord may grant them true repentance. It is on this account that he warns the Church so strongly against the sin of avarice. The main part of the letter consists of simple moral and spiritual exhortations.

The letter is accepted as genuine even by many

[1] Lucian, at the end of his book *On the Death of Peregrinus*, says that a spectator professed to have actually witnessed prodigies which Lucian himself had invented.

[2] The plural does not *necessarily* imply that St. Paul wrote more than one letter to them; but it is nearly certain that he must have done so.

sceptical critics. It is well supported by external evidence, and indeed, the testimony of Irenaeus would alone be sufficient when we consider the internal evidence in its favour. For it contains nothing which would have led any one to forge such a document. Various minute objections which have been urged against it turn out, on closer examination, to be rather indications of genuineness. The only possible motive which has been assigned for a forgery is the supposed desire to support the authority of the Ignatian letters; but here, as Bishop Lightfoot has shown, the answer is decisive.[1] A forger desiring only to maintain the Ignatian letters would surely have written with the same views and interests as Ignatius himself. But, on the contrary, the letter of Polycarp is strikingly unlike those of his friend. Ignatius, for instance, writes in a tone which has been regarded as eminently hierarchical. He constantly insists on episcopacy, and the duties of obedience to bishops. But Polycarp neither alludes to his own episcopal rank, nor gives the slightest indication that there is any bishop at Philippi, nor so much as mentions any bishop at all. He speaks of presbyters and deacons, and of the duty of obedience to them, and "writes in such a way that he himself has been mistaken for a presbyterian." Again, Polycarp's manner of naming Christ is not the same as that of Ignatius, nor does he dwell on the doctrinal statements respecting Him to which Ignatius so constantly recurs. Nor, again, does he revert incessantly, as does the elder martyr, to the blood, the passion, the cross of Christ; nor does he allude to "the Church" as a whole; nor does he dwell on its unity; nor does he employ even one of those Eucharistic allusions in which Ignatius delights. On the

[1] I. pp. 574-583.

other hand, Polycarp's language is often almost a cento of phrases from the New Testament, and especially from the First Epistle of St. Peter,[1] whereas the direct quotations of Ignatius are far more rare. The letters of Ignatius are original and characteristic; the letter of Polycarp hardly rises above the ordinary level of colourless exhortation.

There is nothing very distinctive in his theology, but apart from a few expressions which would have been avoided by writers who lived when the science of theology was more elaborately developed, his views appear to be entirely orthodox. His silence on particular points—such as the Holy Spirit, and the Angels—cannot of course be regarded as significant; for his letter is short, and, so to speak, accidental. He had not the least intention to write a creed or a treatise of divinity. His want of originality was fortunate, for the chief work of his life was to preserve intact the tradition and testimony which he had received in early manhood from the Apostles and apostolic men. Renan has called him "an ultra-conservative," and says "tout ce qui ressemblait à une idée nouvelle le mettait hors de lui." That it was so must be regarded as a providential fact. Had he been a man of genius and imagination, the great age to which he attained might only have served to trouble and confuse the well-spring of early tradition. His unoriginal receptivity was the best guarantee for his accurate transmission of every essential truth.

[1] His references to the *Old* Testament are less numerous—only three or four. In c. 10 he refers to Tobit. iv. 11, xii. 9. Considering his intimate relations with St. John, and the pride with which he recalled them, it is a little surprising that he only once refers to his writings (c. vii. where he quotes 1 John iii. 8). The supposed reference to John xv. 16 in chap. xii. is too vague to be relied on.

III

ST. IRENAEUS

"Φωστὴρ Γαλατῶν τῶν Ἑσπερίων."—THEODORET. *Immut.*

"ὁ μὲν Εἰρηναῖος φερώνυμός τις ὢν τῇ προσηγορίᾳ,
αὐτῷ τε τῷ τρόπῳ Εἰρηνοποιός."—EUSEB. *H. E.* v. 24.

THE views of the Church as to formal theology, as to Scripture interpretation, and as to her own position and authority, were mainly moulded in the first three centuries by five men.[1] Three of these were bishops—Ignatius, Irenaeus, Cyprian. Two—far greater in intellectual power—were only respectively a teacher and a presbyter, Clement of Alexandria and Origen. To the first three was due in great measure the long-prevalent theory of ecclesiastical organisation and hierarchic influence; to the last two the philosophic treatment of the truths of theology, and the fixation of the allegorical method of explaining Scripture. The former aimed at establishing a Catholic unity, the latter a Catholic science.

EDITIONS AND LIVES OF IRENAEUS, AND OTHER AUTHORITIES.—*Editio Princeps. Erasmus*, Basle, 1526; *Feuardent*, 2d ed. Paris, 1596; *Grabe*, Oxford, 1702; *Benedictine* (Massuet), Paris, 1712; *Stieren*, Leipz. 1853; *Harvey*, Cambr. 1857. For his general standpoint, see *Haer.* iv. 33-8.

[1] Quarry in *Brit. Quart. Rev.* July, Oct. 1879.

Memorable and abiding as was the influence exercised by Irenaeus upon the establishment and formulation of Catholic doctrine, we know but few particulars of his biography. We do not even know whether he was a Greek or a Syrian. His name, Εἰρηναῖος "the peaceful," is Greek, and it accorded so well with his character that Eusebius notices the fact;[1] yet Greek was then so universally spoken that many Syrians, and some even of the Galilean apostles, had Greek names. His partial knowledge of Hebrew and of the Syriac version of the Old Testament, have led to the inference that he was of Eastern origin.[2] The date of his birth is uncertain, but it was probably between A.D. 120 and 125.[3]

The Western Church in the first two centuries added but little to the literature of Christian theology. Apart from Proconsular Africa, Western theology can refer but to two illustrious names—Irenaeus and Hippolytus;[4] and both of these wrote in Greek and were trained under Eastern influences. The Church of Rome was less occupied with theology than with discipline and organisation.[5]

Irenaeus spent his youth in Smyrna, where, with his friend Florinus, he was a pupil of Polycarp. He speaks of this as having happened in his early years, which

[1] *H. E.* v. 24. It is quite possible that "Irenaeus" was the Greek for some equivalent Syriac name, just as "Porphyrius" was meant to represent the Syriac Malcho. His apology for his imperfect style of Greek points in the same direction.

[2] Harvey, *Proleg.* i. cliii.

[3] Dodwell fixes it in A.D. 97, which is far too early. Böhringer, Ziegler, and others bring it as low as A.D. 147, which is far too late. The supposed allusion to the Apocalypse (*Haer.* v. 30, 3) is too slight to build upon, and is probably founded on an entire mistake. Tillemont and Lightfoot (*Cont. Rev.* Aug. 1876) fix his birth A.D. 120.

[4] Of Caius the presbyter but little is known. See Lightfoot, *Journal of Philology*, i. 98; and *infra*, p. 122.

[5] Pressensé, *Hist. des Trois prem. Siècles*, iii. 417.

may include any age between ten and thirty.[1] The only nearer clue to the date is his allusion to the fact that Florinus was then enjoying the sunshine of "the royal court."[2] It has been assumed by Dodwell and Zahn that this phrase can only allude to one of the two visits of the Emperor Hadrian to Smyrna in A.D. 122 and A.D. 130; but Bishop Lightfoot thinks that it may apply to the proconsular court of T. Aurelius Fulvus in A.D. 136, two years before he became known as the Emperor Antoninus Pius. Florinus, after he was ordained presbyter at Rome, lapsed into Gnosticism. He became, as we learn from the Syriac fragment of a letter which Irenaeus wrote to Pope Victor, "a partisan of the error of Valentinus."[3] To Florinus himself Irenaeus wrote a letter "On the Unity of God and the Origin of Evil," in which he endeavours to win back the erring presbyter by reminding him of the memories of their youth, and of the indignation which these novel views would have kindled in the mind of their teacher Polycarp. In this touching letter he makes his favourite appeal to tradition in support of the cause which he has most at heart,—the unity and purity of the Catholic Church.[4] It has been conjectured that Florinus was deposed from his rank as presbyter by Pope Victor about A.D. 188; but from this time we lose sight of him, and cannot tell the effect produced by the appeal of his friend.

Irenaeus, in his other writings, frequently refers to elders who were pupils of the Apostles, and to one particular elder whom he does not name, but to whose

[1] Irenaeus, in *Haer.* ii. 22, 4, divides life into five periods—infant, boy, youth, young man, elder.

[2] εἶδόν σε λαμπρῶς πράττοντα ἐν τῇ βασιλικῇ αὐλῇ.

[3] Harvey's *Irenaeus*, ii. 457.

[4] This letter is only known to us from the fragment quoted by Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 20.

traditional statements he attached great weight.[1] We do not know who this elder was. Jerome seems to have inferred that it was Papias, for he says that Irenaeus was a scholar of Papias. He had doubtless gleaned all he could from the little circle of presbyters who, in their old age, could still tell him something about the Apostles and their teaching.[2] But he was most deeply impressed by the lessons of Polycarp, which he says came back to his recollection more vividly than many events of more recent occurrence. He seems to have been in Rome at the same time as Polycarp, and he may possibly have gone thither with him when the aged bishop visited Anicetus in A.D. 154, the year before his martyrdom.[3]

It is clear that as a youth he must have had an excellent training. Tertullian calls him "a most curious explorer of all kinds of learning."[4] His knowledge of Hebrew and Syriac may have been but slight, but he was not unacquainted with Greek poetry and Greek philosophy, for he quotes Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, and Plato. He continued to be a student all his life, and it must have cost him no little thought and labour to master the subtle and elaborate schemes of Gnostic heresy. It was still more important for his life's work that he had acquired a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and of all that yet existed of Christian literature.[5]

[1] *Haer. Praef.* 2, ὁ κρείττων ἡμῶν.

[2] The "elder" to whom Irenaeus alludes, who had "listened to those who had seen the Apostles," may have been Bishop Pothinus of Lyons, who was martyred at the age of ninety. Hence Eusebius says that Irenaeus "had caught the earliest succession (διαδοχὴ) of the Apostles" (v. 20).

[3] The Moscow MS. of the *Mart. Polyc.* says that Irenaeus was teaching at Rome when Polycarp was martyred.

[4] *C. Valent.* 5.

[5] He certainly made use of Justin Martyr and Hegesippus.

There was a close connexion between Asia Minor and Southern Gaul. Even in the days of St. Paul Crescens had been sent to Galatia (2 Tim. iv. 10), by which Western Gaul may be intended.[1] We find Irenaeus in his manhood serving as a presbyter at Lyons. He may have been sent into that region as a missionary, for it was to Greek missionaries from Asia Minor that Southern Gaul owed its conversion. He was probably ordained by Pothinus, who was a native of Asia Minor, as also were Attalus and Alexander, his fellow martyrs.

In A.D. 177 there burst upon the Churches of Lyons and Vienne that terrible storm of persecution, which was described by some of the surviving confessors in their celebrated letter to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia. It is the earliest trace which we possess of Christianity in Gaul. Many have assumed that Irenaeus himself was the author of this letter, the preservation of which we owe to the invaluable labours of Eusebius of Caesarea.[2] Renan calls it "the pearl of the Christian literature of the second century." There is nothing whatever to prove that Irenaeus wrote it, nor is it likely that he witnessed the scenes described. He would not have left Lyons while the persecution was raging, and had he been there he would hardly have escaped. Once or twice in his life he spent some time at Rome, and one of these visits may have coincided with the days of that fiery trial.

We cannot think without grief of the fact that such a reign as that of the noble Marcus Aurelius should have been stained—and stained to an exceptional degree

[1] Lightfoot, *Cont. Rev.* Aug. 1876, "The Churches of Gaul." Marseilles had been colonised from Asia B.C. 600.

[2] *H. E.* v. 1. Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* i. 295 *sqq.*

—with the blood of martyrs. We must, however, bear in mind that he was in all probability profoundly ignorant of the nature and tenets of Christianity, and further that his mind had been poisoned against the Christians by the calumnies of his tutor Fronto. The Emperor felt for Fronto a high admiration, and Fronto may sincerely have believed the hideous charges which he made against Christians in general, but which, if true in any single instance, were only true of some depraved sect like the Carpocratians. For in the belief that matter was essentially evil, some Gnostics took refuge in rigid asceticism, but others in boundless sensuality. It is however more probable that these slanders were only due to mistaken inferences. It is true that the Apologies of Melito, Miltiades, Athenagoras, and others were addressed to M. Aurelius, and were amply sufficient to refute these falsehoods. But who can say that he ever saw or heard of those humble treatises? He only mentions Christians once, and then casually attributes their eagerness for martyrdom to sheer obstinacy and pompous love of notoriety.[1] He was far more likely to hear and read about pretenders like Peregrinus Proteus, and dissolute heretics like Ophites and Cainites, than about those who in ordinary days came but little under the notice of Roman law, because they lived in blameless innocence, and in "the modesty of fearful duty." But still Christianity continued to be as it had practically been since the days of Nero a *religio illicita;* and whenever (as in A.D. 166 and subsequent years)[2] floods, or fires, or earthquakes, or famine had rekindled the savage superstitions of the

[1] M. Aurel. *Medit.* xi. 3, *μὴ κατὰ ψιλὴν παράταξιν ὡς, οἱ χριστίανοι, ἀλλα λελογισμένως καὶ . . . ἀπραγμόνως.*

[2] A.D. 166 was known as the "*annus calamitosus.*"

Pagan multitude, the old terrible cry of *Christianos ad leones*—the Marseillaise of a dying heathendom—was sure to rise.[1] What it was which had specially kindled the fury of the Gauls we do not know, but slaves were seized and tortured to make them confess that Christians in their secret assemblies were guilty of cannibalism and all sorts of abominations. Some of the slaves, in their agony, were ready to confess anything, though others, like the martyred girl Blandina, declared to the last (as had been done by the Bithynian martyrs and confessors) that the Christians did nothing wrong. In this persecution many perished. Neither age nor sex were spared, and the boy Ponticus met his cruel death at the age of fifteen with as noble a constancy as the Bishop Pothinus, whose head was white with the snows of ninety years. "Who is the God of the Christians?" asked the magistrate. "If thou art worthy," answered the Bishop, "thou shalt know." Had Irenaeus been at Lyons during these dreadful scenes, it is difficult to believe that we should find no further allusions to them in his writings.

We learn from Eusebius that, on one occasion, whether before or after the death of these martyrs, he was sent by the Confessors of Lyons and Vienne to intercede with Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, on behalf of the Montanists.[2] In their letter, written "for the sake of peace" and with an allusion to his name "the Peaceful," they beg Eleutherus to receive him with kindness and honour as one who was zealous for the

[1] The words are rhythmic. They consist of two sonorous epitrites | — ∪ — — | — ∪ — — |

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* v. 4. It was to Eleutherus (according to Bede) that the British King Lucius applied for missionaries, about A.D. 167, but the Episcopate of Eleutherus was from *circ.* A.D. 174-189.

cause of Christ, and also as a presbyter of their Church—"our brother and associate."[1]

Of the Montanists we shall hear much more in the life of Tertullian. The germs of their opinions lay in the very soil of primitive Christianity, and many of those opinions, apart from the perversions and extravagances into which they were pushed were innocent and primitive. There was a tinge of what corresponded to the later Montanism even in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, though Tertullian fiercely calls him "the shepherd of adulterers." Irenaeus, and the Churches with which he was connected, were opponents of Montanism in its extreme form, and, as we see in the story of their troubles, were unfavourable to its gloomy fanaticism.[2] On the other hand, they probably sympathised with the better Montanists in that firm conviction of the living, abiding and individual influence of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of each true Christian, which was in danger of being crushed by the tyrannous routine of ceremonies and organisation.[3] Eusebius bears testimony that the letter of the Gallic confessors was "most pious and most orthodox;" and the probability is that while they repudiated all schismatising errors, they pleaded with the Pope to deal gently with the Montanists at Rome so as not to imperil the peace of the Churches.

[1] Jerome alludes to the play upon his name—"Honorificas *super nomine suo* ad Eleutherum . . . perfert litteras." Eleutherus is mentioned as still living, in Iren. *Haer.* iii. 3, sect. 3.

[2] The Montanist martyr Attalus, native of Pergamos, was persuaded to abandon his vegetarian asceticism, because it looked like a reflection on his brethren. His fellow-sufferer Alexander, a Phrygian physician, had lived many years in Gaul. *Ep. Eccl. Lugd. et Vienn.* ap. Euseb. v. 3.

[3] The Gallic Christians had written on controverted points to the Phrygian Montanists (Euseb. v. 3); and the martyrs wrote to them from prison (id. 4).

Irenaeus could not but have rejoiced to be the bearer of such a document; and it accords so well with his pacific instincts, that he may have had a large share in its composition. What was the issue of his mission we do not know, but we infer from Tertullian that Eleutherus was beginning to take a more favourable view of the prophecies of Montanus, Prisca, and Maximilla, and to restore peace to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia, when Praxeas intervened.[1] He spoke to the Pope unfavourably of the Phrygian prophets, and by reminding him of the views of his predecessors, induced him to recall his letters of peace after they had been despatched, and to withdraw from his purpose of acknowledging the "gifts of the Spirit" claimed by the Phrygian sectaries.[2] "Thus," says Tertullian, "he took in hand two works of the devil; he expelled prophecy and introduced heresy; he drove out the Paraclete, and crucified the Father." [3]

While Irenaeus was at Rome he probably delivered lectures against various forms of heresy, which were the first outline of his principal work. Hippolytus, his great follower, tells us (in a fragment preserved by Photius) that he had heard these lectures, and it is hardly likely that he heard them at Lyons.

After his return to Lyons, or perhaps during his absence in Rome, Irenaeus was elected the successor to Pothinus in his difficult and dangerous post. As there was at that time no other bishopric in Gaul, it is probable that he was consecrated by Eleutherus in Rome.[4]

[1] Tertullian does not name Eleutherus, but only says "episcopum Romanum," so that the inference is not certain.

[2] Hippolytus wrote a book *περὶ χαρισμάτων*, in which he probably dealt with the claims of the Montanists to special gifts of the Spirit.

[3] *C. Prax.* 1. An allusion to the Sabellian views of Praxeas, who, "confounding the Persons," was charged with being a Patripassian.

[4] We hear of no bishop but only of a deacon during the persecution

His long and peaceful life as Bishop of Lyons was spent in literary activity, pastoral work, and missionary preaching. Amid all his efforts to refute heresy within the Church he did not forget the duty of endeavouring to win the heathen into the fold. Of these labours we have no details, but we learn incidentally from the martyrologies that he had sent to Besançon as missionaries the presbyter Ferreolus and the deacon Ferrutio, who were there martyred. The name *Rue des martyrs* still continues in Besançon as a memorial of their fate.

The only other fact that we know about him is that he wrote to Pope Victor to administer to him a noble reproof for intemperate zeal (*θερμότητα*) in abandoning the tolerance of his predecessor and excommunicating the Asiatic Churches because they persisted in keeping Easter according to the custom which their fathers had learnt from St. John.[1]

at Vienne, and Eusebius speaks of Irenaeus as a Bishop of the Gallic Churches generally (Euseb. *H. E.* v. 23).

[1] Socrates, *H. E.* v. 22. *Βίκτωρ ἄμετρα θερμανθεὶς ἀκοινωνησίαν τοῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀσιᾳ τεσσαρεσκαιδεκατίταις ἀπέστειλεν.* See *infra*, p. 111.

III

Continued

THE VIEWS OF ST. IRENAEUS

SECTION II

"Omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus expolorator."—TERT. *C. Valent.* 5.

IRENAEUS was chiefly illustrious as a theologian. It was his duty to defend the doctrines of Christianity against the attacks of the Gnostics, and in order to do this he had to formulate them with precision.

Like Papias, Barnabas, and Tertullian, he was a millenarian,[1] but in most other respects his opinions are orthodox,[2] and he maintained them with calm good-sense, scriptural reasoning, and beautiful moderation. He is the earliest Church writer who quotes from almost every book of the New Testament. His views of the relation between the Old and New Testaments are wise

[1] He does not indeed say that Christ's earthly kingdom is to last only a thousand years, but he understands the reign of Christ on earth in a material sense.

[2] The Beast (Λάτεινος) is to be a concrete person, the concentration of all evil, and is to reign in Jerusalem three years and five days. Irenaeus even reproduces the strange story about the grape bunches and the wheat-ears which Papias professes to have heard from St. John (*Haer.* v. 33, 3). Some of his opinions about the manner in which the Atonement affected the dealings of God and Satan were peculiar. He thought that the *ransom* of man was made to the devil (*Haer.* v. 1, 1). Baur and others explained "non cum vi, sed secundum suadelam," to mean that God *persuaded* not man but *the devil* (Baur, *Versöhnungslehre*, p. 31). The devil is not named except in the abstract as "the apostasy."

and sober, and he sees with clearness the abrogation of Judaism, though he unfortunately failed to perceive how completely the Epistle to the Hebrews cuts at the root of his transference to the Christian presbyterate of the functions of the Jewish priesthood. He seems, however, to have derived, from Esdras, v. 44, an exaggerated view as to the part taken by Ezra in restoring (*ἀνατάξασθαι, ἀποκαταστῆσαι*, iii. 25) the whole Old Testament after the Exile. As an expositor of Scripture he formulates admirable theories, though in practice he is not always true to them. He was, so far as we know, the first Christian scholar who troubled himself about the different readings of the manuscripts.[1] In his view of inspiration he did not exclude the human element. He wrote a book on the *hyperbata* of St. Paul, which he attributes to the tumultuous rapidity of his thoughts.[2] He rejected both the bare literalism, which led Marcion to set aside the Old Testament, and the Gnostic allegorising which would have turned the Bible into a mere riddle to be manipulated by the fancies of philosophers, and twisted into any meaning which they chose to attach to it.[3] On the plea that our Lord was "the Truth," and there is no lie in Him, he repudiated the pretence that His teachings could always be explained away on the theory of "accommodation," or condescension to the ignorance and the prejudices of His hearers.[4] He also rejected alike the Ebionite disparagement of St. Paul and the Marcionite assumption that the full truth of Christ's doctrine had been revealed to him alone[5]—an assumption which would

[1] V. 30, 1, *ἐν πᾶσι, τοῖς σπουδαίοις καὶ ἀρχαίοις ἀντιγράφοις.*

[2] Cf. *Haer.* iii. 7, 1, 2. [3] Id. iii. 5, 1.

[4] See v. 35, 1, 2: "Nihil allegorizari potest, sed omnia firma," etc., iii. 12, 11. "Si quis autem aegrotans circa quaestiones ea quae ab apostolis de Deo docta sunt allegorizanda existimat," etc.

[5] Id. iii. 13, 1.

have been most displeasing to the Apostle himself.[1] Nothing can be keener than the remarks which he makes about the duty of explaining obscure passages by clearer, and against the atomistic use of isolated texts to prove a system, which he compares to weaving ropes of sand, and to the breaking up of the mosaic of a king, to reproduce from its fragments the image of a dog or of a fox. Yet he is not himself wholly free from the use of Gnostic methods. He saw a reference to the Trinity in the three spies who went to Rahab, and he attaches impossible allegoric significance both to the repulsive story of Lot's incest, and to Christ's washing of the disciples' feet.[2] By a process half Philonian and half Pythagorean he proves that there *could* only have been four Gospels, because there are four quarters of the heavens and four winds. On slight and fanciful grounds he compares the evangelists to the four cherubic emblems of the man, the lion, the ox, and the eagle; and, in the laudable desire to set aside the Gnostic Apocrypha, vainly tries to find *dogmatic* grounds also for maintaining the existence of only four evangelists.[3] He implicitly believes in the inspiration of the Septuagint, and, like Justin, accepts the fable of its miraculous origin.

Irenaeus relies very largely upon tradition. His rule of faith did not need so weak a support. He himself reproaches the Jews with mixing the wine of revelation with water by introducing the commandments of men and vain traditions learnt from their fathers.[4] He appeals to tradition in support of facts which are now universally rejected, and of stories which contain very dubious elements. Thus he tells us that Christ lived to

[1] *Haer.* iii. 14, 1 (Gal. ii. 8, etc.) [2] Id. iv. 20, 12; 31, 1; 22, 1.
[3] Id. iii. 11, 8. Böhringer, *Iren.* pp. 400-412.
[4] Id. "*Aquatam* traditionem."

the age of fifty years; and for this assertion, which is rejected by the whole Christian world, he quotes, in the most emphatic way, the sanction of a tradition which he had learnt from the elders. In support of his theory that the Apostles had handed down a compact and definite body of formulated doctrine to the bishops (to whom he consequently gives unique authority in settling all points of dispute about religious questions) he tells us that the Church of Rome was founded by the Apostles (*Haer.* iii. 3, 3), a statement which is not in accord with what we should naturally infer from the New Testament. He asserts that the Apostles established "bishops" in all the Churches which they founded; endowed them with authority to teach what was to be handed down in unbroken succession, and bestowed on them pre-eminently the gift of discerning and knowing the truth.[1] We will not go so far as to call this "an historic fiction"; but, if it be true, it is strange that, on the one hand, all the data which we possess should point to a different conclusion, and that, on the other hand, we should hear nothing definite about this fact until it was required to strengthen the hands of the combatants against Gnosticism in the last third of the second century.[2] But it is impossible to read Irenaeus without seeing that he endows the visible Church with an infallibility in all things which was never promised by Christ, and loads it with attributes and eulogies which are scarcely derived from the language of Scripture.[3]

Apostolical traditions in secondary matters—as, for

[1] *Haer.* iv. 26, 2. "Quapropter eis qui in Ecclesia sunt presbyteris obaudire oportet his qui successionem habent ab apostolis, qui cum episcopatus successione *charisma veritatis certum*, secundum placitum Patris acceperunt." [2] See Böhringer, *Iren.* pp. 422-425.

[3] *Haer.* iii. 24, 1, v. 20, 1, 2, etc.

instance, on the day for observing Easter—were not always uniform, and this might have shown Irenaeus that the tradition to which he so triumphantly appeals was not sufficiently trustworthy to save him from errors of history, of Biblical interpretation, and even of religious theory.[1] In these particulars his statements are set aside by all the Churches, and it is therefore clear that his authority is not decisive, and that the secret of infallibility had neither been handed down to him by Polycarp nor received by Polycarp from the disciple who lay on Jesus' breast. All that is true in his teaching rests on the sure foundation of the direct words of Christ and the recorded testimony of His Apostles. It is based on that rock of truth, not on the sandy and crumbling foundations of oral tradition.

In most cases, however, he appeals to tradition in a *limited* sense to contrast it with the false interpretations and doctrines which the Gnostics professed to derive from esoteric transmission. The tradition of which he is then mainly thinking is the Canon of the Truth, the Rule of Faith, summed up in the belief handed down by the Twelve Apostles.[2] It is in his writings that we find the earliest traces of our present creeds.

Besides his great work, Irenaeus wrote his letter or treatise to Florinus; a book *On the Ogdoad*, against Valentinus, drawn up also for the sake of Florinus; a book *On the Schism*, addressed to Blastus, the chief of the Montanists at Rome; and others now entirely lost. Eusebius quotes from the book *On the Ogdoad* an adjuration to transcribers to copy faithfully, and to

[1] See Lipsius, *Dict. of Christ. Biog.* iii. 274.

[2] The supposition of *any traditional doctrine of a vital character* beyond what is contained in Scripture would have vitiated the entire argument of Irenaeus, by conceding the possibility of that on which his adversaries relied.—Quarry.

include the adjuration in their copies. Four Greek fragments were discovered by Pfaff at Turin in 1715.[1] The first is a beautiful statement that the true gnosis does not consist in controversial subtlety, but in divine wisdom and the imitation of Christ. The second shows that, though Irenaeus, like other Fathers, uses language about the bread and wine in the Eucharist, which, when dissevered from its context and original intention, may easily be distorted to imply transubstantiation, yet, when speaking with precision, he holds no such view.[2] He there says that the Eucharistic sacrifice is not corporeal but spiritual, and tells Christians to pray *after* the Eucharist, "that the Holy Ghost may make this sacrifice the body of Christ and the blood of Christ, that those who partake of these antitypes may obtain the remission of their sins and eternal life."[3] In

[1] That Pfaff did really find them is admitted; but the originals have mysteriously disappeared.

[2] Grabe (p. 323) gives the view of Irenaeus and the early Fathers, from whom he makes many quotations. He says that they regarded the oblation of the elements as sacred gifts to God the Father in recognition of His supreme dominion, and "as being offered after consecration as the mystical body and blood of Christ . . . for the representation of the oblation of His body and blood, and for the imputation of the benefits of his death." Bishop Wordsworth (*Ch. Hist.* i. 61) quotes Joseph Mede (*Works*, p. 373), who says, "The ancient Church first offered the bread and wine unto God to agnize Him the Lord of the creatures, and then received them again as the *symbols* of the body and blood of His dear Son."

[3] In Stieren (*Iren.* i. 855), and Bunsen (*Christianity and Mankind*, ii. 424-429) other passages are quoted. "Faith," says Irenaeus, "is the body of Christ; charity is the blood of Christ." See, too, Bleek on Heb. viii. 5, ix. 24; Harvey (i. pp. clxxiii.-clxxv) shows that the language of Irenaeus on the Eucharist in his great work becomes perfectly intelligible when we remember that it occurs in an argument against the heresy that Christ's body was purely phantasmal. "On the whole," he says, "the view of the Eucharist put forth by Irenaeus agrees with the 29th article of our Church, scarcely perhaps with the latter portion of the 28th. In any case, it should not be forgotten that an illustration may be very apt in helping the refutation of any particular heresy, and yet be far from edifying as an element of instruction." "No traces whatsoever of the sacrifice

the third fragment he speaks of the duty of tolerance as regards minor differences of opinion and discipline. "The Apostles have ordained," he says, "that we should judge no one in meat or drink, or in respect to particular feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths. Whence these controversies? whence schisms? We keep feasts, but with the leaven of wickedness and deceit, rending asunder the Church of God, and we observe the outward, to the neglect of the higher, faith and love. That such feasts and fasts are displeasing to the Lord we have heard from the prophets."

In the fourth fragment he explains the object of the Incarnation, and says that Christ "will come at the end of time to bring to nought (*καταργῆσαι*) all evil and to reconcile all things, that there may be an end of all impurity."[1]

The last passage leads us to remark that the language of Irenaeus about the perpetuity of future punishment is (to say the least) ambiguous. He does not here introduce any limitation into the large expressions of St. Paul. In another place his words certainly *appear* to teach the doctrine of the ultimate annihilation of the wicked. He says: "He who shall preserve the life bestowed upon him . . . shall receive also length of days for ever and ever. But he who shall reject it, and prove himself ungrateful to his Maker, inasmuch as he has been created and has not recognised Him who bestowed [the gift], *deprives himself of the privilege of continuance for ever and ever.*"[2] But probably on

of the mass," says Lipsius, "are to be found in his writings. What Irenaeus designates as '*the Church's sacrifice*,' in the Holy Eucharist, and calls, in contradistinction to the sacrifice of the Old Testament, a *nova oblatio*, are only the thank-offerings of bread and wine."

[1] Stieren, i. 889; comp. Col. i. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 28.

[2] *Haer.* ii. 34, 3. "Ipse se privat in saeculum saeculi *perseverantia*."

a subject full of difficulty and mystery, and respecting which there seem to be irreconcilable antinomies in the teaching of Scripture, the opinions of Irenaeus were not very definitely fixed.[1]

We have seen that Irenaeus was forced by the exigencies of his time into three great controversies: (1) with the Montanists; (2) about the Quartodecimans; and (3) with the Gnostics.

(1) With the Montanists he probably felt much sympathy. He did not indeed approve of their extravagances or of their tendency to sectarianism. But both in Asia and in Gaul he found many excellent Christians who agreed with Montanus alike in his resistance of the tendency to crush the freedom of individual religion, and in his desire to maintain that the power of the Holy Ghost still continued to confer spiritual gifts upon true believers. In this controversy Irenaeus wished to play the part of a mediator. He saw that the Montanists might be goaded into defiance and permanent schism by unwise severity, but that they might be retained in their allegiance, and might even exercise a salutary influence on the theology of the Church, if they were treated with moderation, and if due weight were given to the truths they held.

(2) The Quartodeciman controversy turned on a

Massuet (*Iren.* opp. p. cliii. ed. 1710) interprets *perszverantia* to mean "eternal bliss," not continuance of life. This is clearly arbitrary, though in other places Irenaeus uses vague phrases about "endless torments."

[1] For a fuller discussion of this and other passages, I beg leave to refer to my *Mercy and Judgment*, pp. 239-242. The view which I maintain of the sense is that mantained also by Bishop Jeremy Taylor (*Works*, iv. 43), and Bishop Huet (*Origeniana*). And that sense, though it seems to conflict with more loose and popular expressions, is distinctly implied elsewhere by Irenaeus, "that man should not last for ever as a sinner, and *that the sin which was in him might not be immortal and an infinite and incurable evil.*"

matter of Church order and discipline. It involved no dogma, and yet threatened at one time to rend asunder the Church.

The first feasts and fasts of which we hear in the Church were weekly.[1] We are not told of any yearly celebrations either of fast or festival till the disputes about the right time for observing Good Friday and Easter which agitated the second century.[2]

The Churches of Asia Minor began the celebration of the Christian Passover—which included Good Friday (*pascha staurosimon*) and Easter (*pascha anastasimon*) — on Nisan 14, irrespective of the day of the week on which the 14th of Nisan occurred. Hence they were called Quartodecimani.[3] On the other hand, the Roman and other Churches *always* observed the day of the Crucifixion on *Friday*, extending their fast till the Sunday. The result was unfortunate; for while most Churches were still observing a time of sorrow and humiliation, the fast of the Asiatic Churches was finished, and they were celebrating the Resurrection with joy and feasting.

We have already seen that this was a point about which Polycarp and Anicetus "agreed to differ," desiring most of all to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Anicetus, the seventh Bishop of Rome, since

[1] Hermas is the first to mention the "stations" of the Christian soldier; half-fasts (*semijejunia*) observed on Wednesday and Friday as being the days on which Christ was betrayed and crucified.

[2] See Prof. Milligan, *Easter Controversies; Cont. Rev.* September 1867; Renan, *L'Église Chret.* pp. 445-451. M. Aurèle, 174-206.

[3] Τεσσαρεσκαιδεκατῖται. The fragments of the eminent Claudius Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis, on this subject (Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* i. 160) are of dubious interpretation. His treatise was περὶ του πάσχα. But if he was a Quartodeciman, why did not Polycrates, in writing to Victor, quote on his own side so high an authority? On the other hand, if he, though an Eastern, adopted the Western practice, it is almost inconceivable that his opinion should not have been quoted on the Catholic side.

Polycarp had become Bishop of Smyrna, could not venture to condemn a pupil of St. John who had been a bishop perhaps before he was born.

But the matter could hardly rest where it was; the ritual variation was soon mixed up with two further questions, one exegetical, and one dogmatic:—(1) Did our Lord eat the Last Supper with His Disciples on Nisan 14 and suffer on Nisan 15, the day of the Passover, as the Synoptist gospels seem to imply? or did He *suffer* on Nisan 14, the day *before* the Passover, as might be naturally inferred from the language of St. John? and (2) was it desirable so closely to identify the Jewish Passover with the Christian Holy Week?

Polycarp had visited Anicetus at Rome in A.D. 154; but thirty years later (A.D. 190-194) the quarrel had assumed far graver proportions. Victor, then Bishop of Rome, haughtily ordered the Quartodecimans of Asia to abandon their practice; but his centralising energy was confronted by the passive resistance of the Asiatics. Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, after summoning a synod, wrote a letter to Victor, which Eusebius has preserved. He refused to recognise in the Church of Rome any claim to infallibility, or any right to dictate to other Churches. He maintained that the Asiatic Churches kept the genuine day, neither adding thereto nor taking therefrom.[1] He appealed to the authority of the "great lights" of Asia; the Apostle Philip (who had died at Hierapolis), and his two aged virgin daughters, together with a third daughter who had died at Ephesus; to John, who rested upon the bosom of the Lord, "who was also a priest, and bore the *petalon*,[2] both a martyr

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* v. 24.

[2] The golden plate of the high priest, inscribed with the words "Holiness to the Lord," Ex. xxviii. 36. On this curious statement see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p. 345.

and teacher,—he is buried at Ephesus;" to Thraseas and Sagaris, bishops and martyrs; to the blessed Papirius, and the eunuch Melito, "who lived altogether under the influence of the Holy Spirit;" and to seven of his own relatives who had been bishops. "All of these," he said, "observed the fourteenth day of Nisan according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith." He himself, now sixty-five years in the Lord, had followed all these examples in observing "the day when the people of the Jews threw away the leaven"; so that after having "conferred with the brethren throughout the world, and having studied the whole of the sacred Scriptures, I am not at all alarmed at those things with which I am threatened to intimidate me. For they who are greater than I have said 'we ought to obey God rather than men.'" He finally appeals to the numerous bishops present at his synod, who, "knowing that he did not wear his gray hairs for nought," consented to this his Epistle.[1]

It might well have been hoped that such a letter, coming from such a man, and appealing to such high precedents, would have checked the arrogant intolerance of the hierarch of Rome, and would at least have induced him to use other means than those of threats and anathemas to further the desired unity. Victor, however, without pausing to weigh the authority of two Apostles and so many bishops and martyrs, proceeded to brand the Quartodecimans as heretics, and to threaten them with excommunication.[2]

Then it was that Irenaeus interposed with his

[1] Jerome speaks of the *ingenium et auctoritatem* of Polycrates.

[2] It is fair to add that Victor may have been irritated by the mingled Montanism and Quartodecimanism of Blastus; and he had on his side the Churches of Palestine, Pontus, Osrhoene, Greece, and Gaul.—Euseb. v. 23.

beautiful and conciliatory letter. Although theoretically he agreed with the practice of Rome,[1] he told Victor how much more Christian had been the conduct of his predecessor Anicetus, and how not he only, but other Bishops of Rome,—Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, Xystus, and Soter,—had lived in peace and communion with the Churches of Asia.[2] Moreover, there were marked differences of usage about the length of the fast. Some fasted for one day, some for two, some for more, some only for forty hours. "The variety of the fast," he said, "does but illustrate the oneness of the faith."

It is probable that this letter prevented the disastrous consequences which would certainly have resulted from the rash and uncharitable vehemence of Victor. At the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, the Roman practice was established, and the Quartodeciman usage gradually died away.[3]

(3.) Far more deadly and far more important was the struggle against Gnosticism, in which Irenaeus proved himself so acute and so learned a disputant.

The book of Irenaeus *Against Heresies*, together with the newly-discovered *Philosophumena* of his hearer Hippolytus, are our chief authorities for the tenets of the Gnostics. Unhappily we know nothing of them at first

[1] We do not know how it was that the Churches of Gaul rejected the Quartodeciman usage, though they had been converted by missionaries from Asia. We might have supposed that Irenaeus would continue the practice of Polycarp and St. John. Perhaps he saw that the question was a very subordinate one, and thought it best to conform to the usage of the west.

[2] Soter (A.D. 168-173) had not interfered with the Asiatics, though he required Quartodecimans *at Rome* to conform to the Roman usage. But see Neander, i. 114. A list of the bishops of Rome, with brief notes, is published at the end of vol. ii.

[3] To this controversy, perhaps, belongs in part the treatise *On the Schism* addressed to the Alexandrian Blastus (Euseb. *H. E.* v. 15, Gr. Fragm. xxxvii).

hand, since no single work of the Gnostics has come down to us, with the exception of a letter of Ptolemy, in which he tries to convert to Valentinianism a wealthy Christian lady named Flora. It is preserved by Epiphanius,[1] and is mainly occupied with the attempt to prove that the Demiurge of the Old Testament and of the ruined creation cannot be the Eternal Father. We cannot be sure that the polemical representations of Gnosticism by the Fathers are always accurate. The subjects dealt with by the Gnostics involved some of the deepest problems which can agitate the human mind. They turned on the creation of the world, the origin of evil, and the interrelation of matter and spirit,[2] and in the treatment of these dark and difficult questions the Fathers may have misunderstood the views of their metaphysical opponents, or the inferences to which they seemed to lead.[3] It is, however, clear that Gnosticism was

[1] Epiphan. *Haer.* xxiii. 3.

[2] Euseb. v. 27 says that among heresiarchs the origin of evil was much discussed. Tert. *De Praescr. Haer.* 7, "unde malum et quare? unde homo et quomodo? et quod proxime Valentinus proposuit, unde Deus?"

[3] It is hardly necessary to give a sketch of Valentinianism, which was absolutely dead by the fourth century. The system was little more than an ingenious speculation. All things sprang from "depth" ("*Bythos*," "the unutterable") and silence (*Sigè*), the immediate parents of "Mind" and "Truth," the "Word" and "Life," "Man" and "the Church." These formed the Ogdoad, and represent the Supreme Being absolutely and relatively. From two of these Æons "The Word" and "Life" (*Logos* and *Zoè*) sprang four more pairs, and with them constituted a Decad; and six other pairs making a Dodecad. The three groups of thirty Æons constitute the *Pleroma* or Plenitude. The second and third groups are merely attributes of God (male), and graces to man (female). The thirty Æons were symbolised by the thirty years of Christ's life; the twelve by the Apostles; the Ogdoad and Decad by ι (= 10) and η (= 8) the two first letters of Ἰησοῦς. The last Æon was Sophia (human wisdom, Achamoth), who, wandering outside the Pleroma in the passionate effort to unite herself with *Bythos*, communicated life to matter, and formed the *Demiurge*, who immediately created the world, which is composed of three elements —the spiritual, the carnal, and the material. The object of religion is

a chaos of ill-assorted elements; it was neither Paganism, nor Judaism, nor Christianity, but a strange and impossible amalgam of Jewish errors and Oriental theosophy, with the residuum of Christian doctrines after they had been evaporated in the crucible of Platonism. The Gnostics placed knowledge above faith, and claimed to be the exclusive possessors of the true *Gnosis*. But their doctrine assumed various and often mutually antagonistic forms. The Gnostics seized on the allegoric method of Scriptural exegesis to make the Bible say anything which they pleased; and by bestowing imaginary concreteness on imaginative symbols they created a sort of mythology of Æons or intermediate existences, which enabled them to bridge over the apparently impassable chasm between spirit and matter, between God and the world.[1]

This is the only work of Irenaeus which has survived entire. It is called a *Refutation and overthrow of the knowledge falsely so-called*, but, since the days of Jerome, has been usually cited under the briefer title *Against Heresies*.[2] It occupied the toil of many years (A.D. 182-188), and is devoted to a confutation of the error which represented itself as "truer than the very truth."[3] He endeavoured to save simple souls from

that the spiritual should return to the Pleroma, the carnal to the Achamoth in the intermediate world, and both be separated from the material. The two new Æons, Christ and the Holy Spirit, are to restore to the Pleroma its disturbed harmony;—and so forth. Except as the merest abstract and imaginative theogony, could anything be more fantastic?

[1] The leaders of the Egyptian Gnosticism were Basilides and Valentinus. They were chiefly swayed by Greek influences. The systems of Saturninus, Bardesanes, Tatian, and the Syrian Gnostics were more Eastern in their character. See the note on various heresies at the end of Vol. II.

[2] It was written after Theodotion's version of the Old Testament. A. D. 181 (Epiphan. *De Mensur.* 17).

[3] *Haer. Praef.* ἡ γὰρ πλάνη . . . αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας ἀληθεστέραι ἑαυτὴν παρέχει.

the peril of mistaking for a genuine emerald the sham jewel of green glass with which the Gnostics tried to dazzle them.[1] To the endless variations of the heretics he opposes the majestic unity of the Catholic Church.

The first book of this great treatise has come down to us in the original Greek, because Epiphanius copied it out, and incorporated it into his work against heretics. Other fragments are preserved by Eusebius, Theodoret, John of Damascus, and others. Of the rest we possess a Latin translation, crabbed and sometimes unintelligent, but very ancient, and so slavishly literal that it often enables us to reproduce the Greek original.[2] Irenaeus apologises for his style by the remark that he is daily using the barbarous dialect of the Celts. There is little need for his apology, for he had probably spoken Greek from childhood, and he wields the language with perfect facility.

His book was specially aimed at the gorgeous dreams of Valentinus, which a friend had asked him at once to explain and refute. The Valentinian heresy was one of the most elaborate and singular forms assumed by the Proteus of Gnosticism. After all the perplexing volumes which have been devoted to the elucidation of Gnosticism, and the light thrown upon it by the *Philosophumena* of Hippolytus, we can at least see that it was mainly characterised by speculation and by syncretism. All its manifold *speculations* are reducible to the attempt to solve two problems which are alike

[1] *Haer.* 1, *Praef.* He quotes the comparison from his venerated "elder," whether Polycarp or Pothinus *κάθως ὑπὸ τοῦ κρείττονος ἡμῶν εἴρηται ὅτι . . . τὸν τίμιον σμάραγδον . . . ὕαλος ἐνυβρίζει διὰ τέχνης παρομοιουμένη.*

[2] This Latin version, probably the work of some Gallic presbyter, was known even to Tertullian when he wrote against Valentinus in A.D. 199 (Massuet).

insoluble by human reason, though they have ceased to be perplexing to a simple faith. Those two problems are (1) The origin of God; (2) The mode of union between the finite and the infinite, and the manner in which the chasm has been bridged which separates God from man. Its *syncretism*—for it was not merely *eclectic*,[1] but strove to weld together the most alien and antagonistic elements—was stimulated by the endeavour to amalgamate with Christianity the beliefs of Eastern religion and the opinions of Greek philosophers. The result was indeed a "*rudis indigestaque moles.*" The Persian theosophy of Zoroaster, the Kabbala learned by the Jews in Babylon, the Isiacal traditions of Egypt, as refined into a system of harmony by Plato, the arithmetical theories of Pythagoras, possibly of Indian origin and symbolising the abstract truth and unlimited power of the Deity, were severally laid under contribution. They had been successively amalgamated by the Gnostic schools, and eventually all met in the Valentinian theory. "To us that theory sounds no better than an elaborately ingenious dream; but it was full of poetry and fascination, and agreed so well with the tendency of the times that it probably numbered more adherents than any other heresy."[2] So important was it that, in the opinion of Irenaeus, to refute Valentinianism was practically to refute all other heresies.[3] His treatment of the Marcionites and other schools is less complete. He speaks of devoting a special treatise to the refutation of Marcion, but we do not know whether he lived to accomplish his design.[4]

[1] Syncretism attempts to amalgamate heterogeneous elements by putting them together in irreconcilable juxtaposition; Eclecticism aims at the real assimilation of selected elements.

[2] Harvey's *Irenaeus* I, i. cxlvi.

[3] *Haer.* ii. 31, 1.

[4] Id. i. 27, 4; iii. 12, 12.

In the first book he sketches the system of Valentinus, and the schools which grew out of it; and then to show the origins from which it sprang he gives some account of Ebionitism, and the heresies of Basilides and his son Isidore, and of Saturninus of Antioch. The rest of the book is occupied with briefer accounts of Carpocrates, Cerinthus, Cerdon, Marcion, Tatian, the Barbelonites, and the Ophites. He considers that the statement of their views—derived from their writings, their conversation, and tradition—is in itself a partial refutation. It is a stripping of the fox.[1] In the second book he dwells on the inconsistencies and absurdities of this pretentious system. In the three next books he refutes them by reasoning and by Scripture, and this positive refutation involves a statement of Biblical doctrine. The fourth book overthrows the views of Marcion. The fifth is devoted to Eschatology. It establishes the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; lays down the belief of the Church respecting God, Christ, and salvation; and ends with statements about the appearance of Antichrist, the millennial kingdom, and the return of Christ to judge the world. The two doctrines which are most prominent throughout the book are those which Gnosticism most opposed—(1) the absolute unity of God, as alike the Creator, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the denial of any inferior Demiurge; (2) the rejection of Docetism, and the assertion that there is nothing in matter which is unholy or unredeemable.[2]

The service rendered to the Church by this book was most important. Gnosticism had great attractions for

[1] *Haer.* i. 31, sect. 4. "Conati sumus . . . male compositum vulpeculae hujus corpusculum in medium producere."

[2] To this controversy also belonged his treatise περὶ τῆς ἐπιστήμης.

the minds of recently-converted heathens who had been familiar with philosophy, and whose grasp of the essential truths of Christianity was as yet necessarily imperfect. Irenaeus emphasised the peril which was involved by these hybrid novelties of doctrine which tended to destroy alike the belief in one supreme God, and in that common brotherhood towards whom He shows no respect of persons but an impartial tenderness. The Church was happy in possessing a disputant so able and thoughtful, who could put these doctrines in their true light.

Irenaeus is a writer of supreme importance, because he is the earliest in whom we meet with a complete outline of Christian theology.[1] Personally in his meekness, his tolerance, his learning, his activity, his courage and self-denial, he exhibits a beautiful specimen of that type of character which Christianity first made common in the world. We see in him the lineaments of an innocent and holy man, of a man who walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit.[2]

Irenaeus probably attained the age of seventy or eighty, if, as Jerome says, he flourished in the reign of Commodus (A.D. 180-192). The title of "martyr" is sometimes bestowed on him, but in Jerome the word is of doubtful authenticity, and the silence of the chief fathers and of all the Latin manuscripts (except one) makes it more probable that a natural death closed his long and honourable life of service and self-denial. No importance can be attached to the late assertions of Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Gall.* i. 27) that he perished in

[1] His books on apostolical preaching and on faith, and various sermons and commentaries, are lost.

[2] Scultet charges Irenaeus with heresy about the Second Person of the Trinity; but his orthodoxy is amply defended by Bishop Bull (*Fid. Nic.* iv. 3).

the persecution under Septimius Severus A.D. 202.[1] He is said to have been buried at Lyons under the altar of the Church of St. John, and Feuardent tells a story that a Catholic physician saved his remains, and in particular his skull, from the fury of the Huguenots in 1562, and restored them to the municipality of his native city.

NOTE ON ST. HIPPOLYTUS.

ὁ γλυκύτατος καὶ εὐνούστατος.—*Ps. Chrys.*

With the name of Irenaeus is closely connected that of the learned and eminent Hippolytus, whose history is so full of enigmas. "This famous person," says Dr. Schaff, "has lived three lives: a real one in the third century as an opponent of the Popes of his day; a fictitious one in the Middle Ages as a canonised saint; and a literary one in the nineteenth century after the discovery of his long-lost work against heresies."[2]

As regards his real life, we only know that he was a voluminous controversialist who flourished between A.D. 198 and 236, and was one of the first theologians of his day; that he had heard the lectures of Irenaeus; and that he occupied a position of extreme antagonism to two Popes, whom he describes as *fancying* themselves to be Bishops.[3] One of these, Zephyrinus (A.D. 202-217), he describes as "a weak and venal dunce,"[4] and of Callistus (A.D. 217-222) he speaks as "a cheat (γοής), a sacrilegious swindler, an infamous convict, and an heresiarch *ex cathedra*."[5] We also know

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[1] Lipsius (*Dict. of Christian Biogr.* ii. 261) thinks that he may have been confused with an Irenaeus of Sirmium, martyred under Diocletian, circ. A.D. 304.

[2] *Ante-Nicene Christianity*, ii. 759.

[3] He speaks (ix. 12) of Zephyrinus as διέπειν νομίζοντος τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, and of Callistus not as a real bishop, but head of "a school" (διδασκαλεῖον) and νομίζων τετυχηκέναι οὗ ἐθηρᾶτο.

[4] Ζεφυρίνου ἀνδρὸς ἰδιώτου καὶ αἰσχροκερδοῦς. *Philos.* p. 278.

[5] *Newman Tracts*, p. 222 (1874), Hippolytus says of Callistus ὁ δὲ ἐξαφανίσας τὰ πάντα ἠπόρει. In his despair he meditated suicide, but was saved and condemned to turn a mill. He charges both Popes with a leaning to Patripassianism, and it is not impossible that he and

that he was himself either a presbyter or a bishop, but if he was a bishop (as he seems to imply, for he speaks of his own "high priesthood," and had excommunicated some persons whom Callistus received)[1] we do not know with any certainty whether he was a suburbicarian bishop of *Portus* (probably the haven of Rome), or, as Dr. Döllinger thinks, a sort of schismatical Pope at Rome. Possibly he may have been at the head of the Greek community, while the Latins gave their allegiance to his opponents. It is not a little singular that he should have been the most learned theologian of his day at Rome, and that his works should have been current in many languages, while we yet remain ignorant whether he was orthodox or heretical, a Catholic or a schismatic, a priest or a bishop, a Pope or an Antipope, an excommunicated sectarian or a martyred saint.

Eusebius, who first mentions him, does not know anything about him, except that he was "*bishop of some Church somewhere;*" nor does Epiphanius; nor Jerome, who might be expected to know so much about a Roman martyr. The tradition of the East is that he was a Bishop of Rome. It is not till the seventh century that Portus is mentioned as his see, and some have erroneously fancied he was an Arabian bishop, and that Portus means not the Portus of Rome, but Aden. On the whole the evidence seems to preponderate in favour of the view taken by Dr. Döllinger that Hippolytus was the first of the Antipopes, and if only the Greek part of the Romish Church owned his jurisdiction, this may account for his being called "bishop of the nations."[2] Tradition may have veiled his antagonism to the Romish see sometimes by calling him "a presbyter," and sometimes Bishop of the Portus Romanus, which may have formed one diocese with the neighbouring Ostia. But the whole question remains obscure in spite of the labours of Bunsen, Döllinger, and Wordsworth.

In 1551 a fine statue of him was dug up on the Via Tiburtina, which represents a venerable man in toga and pallium seated in a bishop's chair, on the back of which is engraved a list of his writings, and an Easter table, which goes wrong after the year 222.

Prudentius in the fifth century—150 years after his martyr-

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they exchanged excommunications. If Zephyrinus and Callistus at all resembled the pictures drawn of them by Hippolytus, the condition of the Church must have been deplorable.

[1] *Philos.* ix. 12, τινὲς . . . ἔκβλητοι τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὑφ' ἡμῶν γενόμενοι.

[2] See *Philosoph.* x. 31, 32, 34, where he alludes to Gentiles as being under his special care.

dom—wrote a poem in his honour,[1] in which he says that he was a presbyter of the schism of Novatus ("schisma Novati"). This is both a confusion and an anachronism.[2] He represents him as having repented of his schism, and as having died a martyr's death by being torn to pieces by wild horses, saying with his last breath

"Hi rapiant artus, tu rape, Christe, animam."

This impossible story seems to be derived from a picture, perhaps placed over the grave of Hippolytus, and recalling his name by the mythic story of the son of Theseus.[3] According to another story, Pontianus, the bishop, and Hippolytus, the presbyter, "were banished to the pestilent island of Sardinia in the year that Alexander Severus died" (A.D. 235). If so he may have perished in the mines of Sardinia, and thus have won the reputation of a martyr.

The statue seems in any case to prove that his leanings towards schism, whatever they may have been, and his opposition to two successive Bishops of Rome were condoned, and that his errors, of whatever kind, were deemed to have been washed out by the blood of martyrdom.

Since the discovery of a MS. of his *Philosophumena*, or, *a Refutation of all the Heresies*, in ten books, at Mount Athos in 1842, of which the first book had long been printed among the works of Origen, many treatises have been written about him and his works, especially by Bunsen (*Hippolytus and his Age*, 1852, 4 vols.), Döllinger (*Hippolytus und Callistus*, 1853), and Wordsworth (*St. Hippolytus*, 1853 and 1880). The facts of his biography must ever remain uncertain, and it is possible that his schismatic tendency and his opposition to the Bishops of Rome, together with the circumstance that he wrote in Greek, caused his works to be neglected. He has been called the Roman Origen; but though he leaned to many of Origen's views, he was in depth and originality incomparably inferior to that great thinker. He borrows his theology in great measure from Irenaeus, and most of his statements about philosophy from Sextus Empiricus. But like Eusebius he was a diligent compiler, and what is extant of his works is of the highest importance for the history of theological opinion.

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[1] Prudent. *Peristeph.* xi.

[2] He confuses Novatus, the opponent of Cyprian (A.D. 248) with Novatian, the rigorist, who became an Antipope under Cornelius A.D. 251. If Hippolytus had ever been a sort of Antipope, the Novatians would probably have appealed to his example, which they never did.

[3] This method of suggesting the name of the dead by some allusive picture, was common in the catacombs.

His works show us that the labours of Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen had not been in vain. Many forms of Gnostic heresy were now things of the past, and a severe struggle had arisen against those who taught heretical doctrines about the nature of Christ.

The earnest desire to uphold *Monarchianism*, or the absolute unity of God, had led to error in two directions. On the one hand, Theodotus and Artemon argued that Christ was only man, though miraculously conceived; and on the other, Praxeas, and Noetus, relying on John xiv. 9, so completely identified the Son with the Father as to deserve the name of Patripassians. The Pope Callistus, in his attempt to find a *via media*, said that the Man Jesus was the Son, and that the Spirit in the Son was the Father. With the *subordination* theory, attributed, but perhaps unjustly, to Origen, the uninstructed theologians of Rome were probably but little acquainted, though Origen visited Rome in the days of Zephyrinus and is said to have heard a sermon of Hippolytus. Hippolytus, in answering the Noetians,[1] wisely warned them against the habit of quoting isolated texts apart from their contexts (μονόκωλα), and urged them to study Scripture as a whole.[2] They dwelt especially on John x. 30, "I and the Father are one (not εἷς but ἕν, *unum*);" and, like Tertullian, he rightly explained this of the unity of substance. He was greatly assisted by the works of Irenaeus, and probably of Tertullian, and the contentions of heretics only served to establish the truth on a firmer basis. Sabellius, when he came to Rome in the days of Callistus, taught the more subtle heresy which tried to save monarchianism by treating the Persons of the Trinity as the mere *phases* of the manifestation of one Divine Essence. He seems to have shrunk from encountering Hippolytus, but when he retired to Africa he found a controversialist of even higher power in Dionysius of Alexandria.

Hippolytus was a very voluminous author, and his writings may be classed under the heads of chronological, controversial, exegetic, and dogmatic. His exegesis was allegorical, like that of Origen, and his commentaries were utilised by Ambrose and others. Many of them have entirely perished, and of others nothing remains but fragments. They have been eclipsed by the works of abler and more original thinkers, but in their own day they exercised an important influence. His principal work was the *Philosophumena*, written about A.D. 223. In the fourteenth century MS. of the work found

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[1] He describes his conflict with the Noetians (abetted by Zephyrinus and Callistus) in the ninth book of the *Philosophumena*, which was written soon after the death of Callistus, in A.D. 223.

[2] *C. Noet.* 3, 4.

at Mount Athos, the second, third, and part of the fourth and tenth books are wanting.

The story of Hippolytus does not end with his death. His remains are said to have been translated from Rome to St. Denis in the days of Charlemagne, and in 1159 Pope Alexander III. visited the church, and on being told that St. Hippolytus was buried there, exclaimed, "*Non credo, non credo.*" Whereupon the buried bones made a noise like thunder; and the Pope, falling on his knees, exclaimed, "I believe, my Lord Hippolytus, I believe; pray be quiet." The Pope accordingly built a marble altar to appease the relics of the first Antipope.[1]

A still further question remains about Hippolytus.

During the very same period there flourished at Rome another learned Greek writer who wrote several books bearing the same or nearly the same titles with those of Hippolytus—*e.g.*, one *On the Universe*, and another called *The Labyrinth*,—who was also a friend of Irenaeus — who is also called ἐθνῶν ἐπίσκοπος, and about whom also next to nothing is personally known. He too, like Hippolytus, was an opponent of the Montanists. Can it be, as Dr. Lightfoot suggested,[2] that Caius and Hippolytus are one and the same person—Caius Hippolytus? Almost everything that has been asserted of Caius is predicable also of Hippolytus; Rome was not so rich in learned and blameless theologians as to neglect the name of Caius, and never allow him the title of a saint, unless there were some reason for it. If Caius was really Hippolytus, or if a little *intentional* obscurity was created to veil the unfortunate relations between the Bishop of Portus and the Popes, the difficulty may be accounted for. There seems to have been a desire for a merciful oblivion. Zephyrinus, Callistus, and Hippolytus are all thus united among the saints of the Roman martyrology.

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[1] See Archbishop Benson in *Journ. of Classical and Sacred Philology*, i. 190.

[2] *Journ. of Philol.* i. 98.

IV

ST. JUSTIN THE MARTYR

The second century was the age of the Christian Apologies. They were addressed to the Emperor Hadrian by Quadratus[1] and Aristides;[2] to Antoninus Pius by Justin Martyr;[3] to Marcus Aurelius by Athenagoras,[4] Claudius Apollinaris,[5] and Melito of Sardis;[6] and to the Greeks in general by Tatian,[7] Hermias,[8] and Theophilus,—though the work of the last was nominally addressed to a private friend.[9]

Although these appeals were intended, directly or indirectly, to reach the Emperors, it is doubtful whether those exalted personages ever read them, nor are they blamed for any personal share in the persecutions which called forth the efforts of the Christian defenders. Great and conscientious rulers, like Antoninus and Aurelius, had to bear an enormous weight of responsibility, and were incessantly occupied with the business of half the world. They were obliged in many cases to let the laws take their ordinary course, and thousands of cruel and unjust acts must have been committed, alike

[1] Circ. A.D. 126. [2] Circ. 130. [3] Circ. 140, 155.
[4] Circ. 177. [5] Circ. 176. [6] Circ. 177.
[7] Circ. 160. [8] Late in the second century. [9] A.D. 180.

by mobs and magistrates, of which they had no cognizance. It is as absurd to throw the whole blame of the martyrdoms of Publius and Polycarp on Antoninus Pius, or of the persecution at Lyons and Vienne on Marcus Aurelius, as to charge William III. with all the atrocities committed in the massacre of Glencoe.[1] Their share in these events was merely nominal and official; of the details they probably knew nothing at all. The Apologists do not inveigh against them; they only entreat them to enquire personally into the manner in which the Christians were treated, and to throw over them the shield of common justice.

It was very difficult for the Emperors to learn the truth about the lives and belief of their Christian subjects. They could only derive their opinions from their accredited officers. It was not every provincial magistrate who, according to his lights, tried to be so fair as Pliny; and yet even Pliny held the absurd view which prevailed for centuries later, even in Christian countries, that the rack was the best method for discovering truth. With all his humanity and candour, he neither hesitated to torture poor deaconesses nor to put Christians to death on the general plea that they belonged to an "illegal religion." Christians were terribly unpopular, and were profoundly misunderstood. Juvenal charged the Jews with worshipping "nothing but clouds and the influence of the sky."[2] Romans had been profoundly astonished to hear that when Pompey burst his sacrilegious way into the Holy of Holies, he found—not, as they expected, the head of an ass, but—emptiness.[3] But the Pagans had partially begun to

[1] See Donaldson, *The Apologists*, p. 7.

[2] Nil praeter nubes et caeli numen adorat. Juv. *Sat.* xiv. 97.

[3] Tac. *Hist.* v. 9. "Vacuam sedem et inania arcana."

understand the tenets of Judaism, and so far as they discriminated the Christians from the Jews at all, they regarded Christianity as a yet more degraded form of superstition. Taking their own ignorance for knowledge, they looked on the worship of One who had been *crucified* as the lowest abyss of religious infatuation. Further than this, they were maddened by the moral inflexibility which prevented the Christians from taking any part in public amusements or social gatherings; even from sanctioning by their presence the graceful and joyful festivities of Pagan homes. The heathen looked on them as morose and fanatical intruders, whose ostensible innocence was a rebuke to the commonest and most harmless practices of daily life. What made them still more indignant was, that they believed the rigid exterior of Christians to be the cloak for deeds of nameless abomination. They could not shake off the effects of the persistent calumny that such crimes were carried on in secret gatherings, and occasionally betrayed by slaves and apostates under the hands of the executioner. An intensity of perverted judgment, as well as of personal hatred, rang through the cries of fury which often swelled above the roaring of the wild beasts at the shows of the ampitheatre.

It is easy to see how some of these mistakes arose. Some of the Christian doctrines, and some of the Christian usages, lent themselves with great facility to the grossest misinterpretation. The Christians were often forced, by the stress of persecution, to meet at unusual hours, and under the veil of darkness and in lonely or subterranean places. They used secret signs and watchwords. Dim rumours about their sacramental language lent a sort of sanction to the charge that they partook of human flesh. Even in the days of St. Paul

the union of the Agape with the Holy Communion as an evening meal had led to drunkenness and excesses. The term "brother," by which Christians addressed each other, had obtained the worst significance among the *arcana* of the "abyss of Satan." The "kiss of peace" was so obvious a cause of misconstruction that it had at last to be abandoned. The strange allusions to the final conflagration of the universe sounded like the language of desperate incendiaries. Besides all this, it must be remembered that there were bad Christians as well as good.[1] It was impossible for the heathen to draw distinctions between the whole body of Christians and those strange and revolting sects which, like the Nicolaitans, Carpocratians, and Cainites, deliberately defended the grossest immoralities; or, like the Ophites, were guilty of the wildest superstitions. Apart from the inevitable confusion which was thus caused, the Pagans might easily be misled by the infinite compassion which Christianity extended to the most outcast and the most fallen; and by the doctrine of the equal value of all ranks and conditions of men in the sight of God, which rendered it possible for the authority of a bishop to be wielded even by a Christian slave. Again, the Emperors would not be allowed to forget that Christians constantly talked about "a kingdom," which was certainly not identical with the civil government, and which they would misinterpret in a human sense.[2] We have already seen (p. 66) that Domitian's jealousy was kindled against the relations of our Lord (the *Desposyni*). The Apologists came forward to plead for justice for themselves and their brethren, because they saw that

[1] Justin says to Trypho, "If you know *certain among us to be of this sort* (companions of thieves, etc.) do not for their sakes blaspheme the Scriptures and Christ."—Dial. 82.

[2] *Apol.* i. 11.

many sincerely believed Christianity to be a dark and deadly conspiracy against the morals of society and the institutions of the State.[1]

But the Apologists were able to be aggressive as well as defensive. The creed and the morals of Paganism were terribly open to attack. The popular mythology had already been undermined and honeycombed by philosophers and satirists. Centuries earlier Plato had felt himself compelled to crown Homer indeed with flowers, but still to lead him respectfully out of his ideal republic, as one who sang impious tales about the gods. It is true that Pagan worship concerned itself but little with the moral law. Its priesthood existed to offer sacrifices and serve temples, not to elevate men into holier life or purer wisdom. The latter was the professed task of the philosophers; but the systems of the philosophers presented a chaos of conflicting opinions, and their leaders held very different theories about the bases and obligations of morality. It was unfortunate that the Apologists did not as yet understand that method of furthering the cause of truth which consists in a sympathetic endeavour to disentangle all which is good and true from all which is evil in the opinions of antagonists. Epicureanism was not always or originally a system of unblushing Hedonism, nor was Stoicism a mere haughty self-dependence. The Apologists rendered great services, but it cannot be pretended that they were entirely successful either in their attack on heathendom or in their defence of Christianity. They relied to a great extent on arguments derived from the Old

[1] Justin, at the beginning of his First Apology, says that he presents his address and petition "in behalf of those of all nations who are unjustly hated and wantonly abused, *myself being one of them*." I shall sometimes avail myself of the careful translations furnished by the Ante-Nicene Library, but always compare them with the original.

Testament prophecies, and at that stage of theological and exegetic development it was inevitable that the nature and meaning of Hebrew prophecy should be as yet imperfectly apprehended. They were unable to insist very strongly on the miracles of Christ,[1] because they lived in an age when miracles were in the air, and when rogues and charlatans like Alexander of Abonoteichos found incredible acceptance for the most monstrous and barefaced impostures. They appealed with force to the marvellously rapid spread of Christianity,[2] but they had not yet fully grasped the evidences of Christianity which arise from its inherent supremacy over the conscience and the springs of human action; from its unique revelation of the Fatherhood of God; from the divine sinlessness of its Redeemer; and from its absolute fitness to satisfy all the needs of men. They were neither inspired nor infallible, nor were they in general men of commanding genius or exceptional insight. They rendered, indeed, an inestimable service in enabling the society of their day to form a fairer and less miserably distorted estimate of the faith which was in them. They could not be expected to complete a task which has to be continued and perfected from age to age. And yet in Justin and others we do find at least the germs and outlines of these arguments. They saw that Christianity had created in the hearts of men a new sense of holiness;[3] that now for the first time men were taught to reverence man as man; that Christ's teaching stood on an infinitely loftier plane than that of Socrates; that He had succeeded in enlight-

[1] Quadratus, however, in a passage preserved by Eusebius (*H. E.* iv. 3), does appeal to the evidence for Christ's miracles of healing, and raising the dead.

[2] *Dial.* 117; Tert. *c. Jud.* 7; Iren. *Haer. III.* iv. 2, etc.

[3] Justin, *Apol.* i. 14, 15.

ening not only philosophers, but the humblest of the poor;[1] and that whereas no one would die for faith in Socrates, myriads would die for faith in Christ, "who is the power of the inexpressible God."[2]

There were apparently several Christian writers who bore the common name of Quadratus. Nothing is really known of the writer of the apology, of which an interesting fragment is preserved by Eusebius,[3] in which the writer says that some were still living in his day on whom Christ had performed his miracles of healing. Aristides is represented by Jerome to have been an Athenian philosopher, but we only know from Eusebius that he too addressed an Apology to Hadrian, which is said to have existed as late as the seventeenth century, and may yet be recovered.[4] Agrippa Castor, of whom a few fragments are preserved, wrote against the Gnostics. Aristo of Pella seems also to have written an Apology, and some attribute to him a "Dialogue of Papiscus and Jason," which Celsus treats with great scorn. Of Tatian we shall say a few words later on. The Athenian philosopher Athenagoras wrote an able Apology called "An Embassy about the Christians," as well as an argument on "The Resurrection of the Dead." Theophilus of Antioch addressed his three books to a heathen friend named Autolycus. He adopts the untenable ground of charging Socrates and Plato with plagiarism from the Hebrew prophets; but he states the case of the Christians well, and is a powerful controversialist. His treatise is

[1] *Apol.* i. 60.

[2] See Justin, *Apol.* ii. 10; i. 14.

[3] See Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* i. 75.

[4] An Athenian fragment was published by the Mechitarist Fathers in 1878, which is believed to belong to this Apology, but, if genuine, it seems to be at least interpolated. It gives the title θεοτόκος, "mother of God," to the Virgin Mary.

memorable as the earliest in which occurs the Greek word for Trinity (τριὰς),[1] and in which St. John is quoted by name as the author of the fourth Gospel. Melito of Sardis was a prolific and eloquent writer, who, besides his lost Apology, wrote a book called *The Key*, and is the first writer who gives us a canon of the Old Testament. Claudius Apollinaris and Miltiades also wrote apologies, of which nothing is known. The philosopher Hermias was the author of a clever "Mockery of the Gentile Philosophers," which was perhaps suggested by the writings of Lucian. To the second century belong also Hegesippus and Dionysius of Corinth. The former was a Jewish Christian, whose work existed as late as the sixteenth century in the library of the convent of St. John at Patmos. The fragments of him which still exist contain some curious and interesting statements. Dionysius was an excellent bishop of Corinth, who wrote pastoral letters only known to us by a few fragments.

None of these writers was equal in eloquence to the unknown author of the Epistle to Diognetus, a noble heathen, and perhaps one of the tutors of Marcus Aurelius. All critics unite in the praise of this short vindication of Christian life and doctrine. Bunsen calls it "indisputably after Scripture the finest monument of sound Christian feeling, noble courage, and manly eloquence;" and Semisch, "a jewel of Christian antiquity, unequalled in spirit and treatment by any other work of the Postapostolic period." The style is far more powerful than that of Justin, to whom it has been attributed; and it is strange that so able a writer should have written so little and have remained otherwise unknown. "The speculations about the author," says

[1] *Trinitas* first occurs in Tertullian, *c. Prax.* 4.

Dr. Schaff, "begin with Apollos in the first, and end with Stephens in the sixteenth century."[1]

Justin, whose honourable title of "the Martyr" has almost become a part of his name, occupies a larger space in Christian history than any of these Apologists, for whose writings Eusebius is our chief authority. In his extant works he has fortunately inserted some biographical details, so that we know something about him, not only as an author, but as a man.

In his First Apology, written about A.D. 148, and addressed "to Antoninus Pius, his son Verissimus the philosopher, and Lucius the philosopher,"[2] he announces himself as "I, Justin, the son of Priscus, and grandson of Bacchius, natives of Flavia Neapolis in Palestine."

Flavia Neapolis is the name of the city and colony founded near the ancient Sychem in Samaria, and named after Flavius Vespasian. The modern name Nablous is only a corruption of Neapolis. The father of Justin bears the Latin name Priscus; his grandfather, the Greek name Bacchius; but Greek and Latin names were at this period too widely and indiscriminately diffused, especially in countries of a mixed population, to enable us to found any conclusions upon them. It gives us an additional interest in his writings to know

[1] See Schaff, *Ante-Nicene Christianity*, ii. 701; Keim, *Rom. und das Christenthum*, p. 463. It was first published by Henry Stephens in 1592, and it only existed in a single codex of the thirteenth century at Strasburg, which was burnt in the siege of 1870.

[2] There are some difficulties about this address, nor is the reading certain. A later date than that assigned to the Apology by Eusebius (viz. A.D. 141) seems required by the prominence given to Marcion (*Apol.* i. 26, 58). He says that he is writing (in round numbers) 150 years after the birth of Christ.

that his home was in Palestine, in a neighbourhood which Christ visited, and within a century of His death. He definitely calls himself a Samaritan,[1] but this can only refer to his place of birth not to his blood. Justin was a heathen by birth and education. He tells Trypho that he was uncircumcised,[2] and implies that he was a Gentile.[3] It was not till manhood that he became a convert to Christianity, though even by that time it was very widely diffused.[4] The date of his birth is uncertain. His dialogue with Trypho was held shortly after the rebellion of Barcochba (A.D. 132-136),[5] from which Trypho had escaped.

He had a profound belief in philosophy, and inherited sufficient means to enable him to devote his leisure to a search after truth. But his experiences of philosophic teachers had not been altogether favourable. He recognised the greatness of those who had founded the chief schools, but thought that their successors had adopted their theories without sufficient examination. He had first sought instruction from a Stoic, and stayed for some time under his guidance. But his soul "was athirst for God," and the Stoic not only had nothing to teach him about God but thought such instruction unnecessary. He thereupon went to a Peripatetic, who had a high opinion of his own intelligence, but who disgusted Justin on the very threshold by asking him to settle upon a fee after he had been a few days with him, so that his pupil at once concluded that "he was no philosopher at all." With much more hope he sought the company of a celebrated Pythagorean, who also rated himself very highly, and from whom Justin ex-

[1] *Dial.* 120.
[2] Id. c. xxviii.
[3] *Apol.* i. 53, and ἡμᾶς . . . τοὺς ἐξ ἐθνῶν, *Apol.* ii.
[4] *Dial.* 117. Comp. Iren. i. 3, Tert. *c. Jud.* 7.
[5] *Dial.* 1.

pected to learn the elements of a peculiar and choice philosophy. But when he offered himself as a pupil, the Pythagorean asked him whether he was acquainted with music, astronomy, and geometry? For how could he hope to apprehend the things which conduce to a happy life if he had not first been trained in the studies which wean the soul from sense, and enable it to comprehend the good and the honourable in their essence? Justin confessed his ignorance of these and other studies, and thereupon the Pythagorean dismissed him. The inquiring youth regretted this, for he believed that the Pythagorean really had something to teach him; but, meanwhile, he felt profoundly discouraged by the thought that he would have to go through so long a course of preliminary training before he could satisfy his longing for religious truth. In despair, therefore, he turned to the Platonists. A Platonist of ability and distinction had recently come to the city,[1] and Justin ardently availed himself of his instruction. Platonism had for him the utmost charm. The contemplation of ideas seemed to plume his mind with wings,[2] and now at last he imagined that he had attained to wisdom, and that Platonism would fulfil for him its promised end of enabling him to look upon God. He subsequently came to regard such an expectation as a sign of his own stupidity. He had not yet found an answer to his anxious question "Where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?"

The first thing which drew his notice to the doctrines of Christianity was the fearless indifference with

[1] Probably Ephesus, for we can hardly suppose that so many distinguished philosophic teachers would have been content to reside at a small and obscure colony like Flavia Neapolis. Eusebius says that the dialogue with Trypho was held at Ephesus (*H. E.* iv, 18), where there was a xystus such as Justin mentions (*Dial.* c. 1).

[2] *Dial.* 2.

which Christians braved death.[1] It was a phenomenon which attracted general attention, but which, taken alone, would have no great weight. Marcus Aurelius spoke of it with a touch of disdain. The Christians themselves viewed without any admiration the constancy of heretical martyrs; and, indeed, experience has proved, by myriads of instances in every age, that it does not require either Stoic magnanimity or Christian innocence to face without flinching a fate which the most abandoned criminals have met without the slightest sign of fear or weakness. But Justin observed that the Christians were fearless not only of death but of all other things which men dread. They had already caught the spirit which Dante describes in the lines—

> "Temer si deve sol di quelle cose
> Ch' hanno potenza di fare altrui male:
> Dell' altre no, che non son paurose."[2]

Justin, at that time a Platonist, had heard, and more or less believed the common charges brought against the Christians—that they fed on human flesh, that they slew a human being, and drank their fill of blood, and lived lives of shameless impurity. But when he noticed the calm bearing of Christians, and saw that they did not even attempt to escape from observation but were ready openly to confess their faith, his belief in these calumnies was shaken. He ascertained that they were the opposite of the truth, and that the Pagans laid their own misdeeds to the account of Christians, who hated and denounced such works of darkness. At last he came to wish that someone would mount a lofty rostrum, and exclaim, in tragic voice, "Shame, shame on the guilty, who charge upon

[1] *Apol.* i. 8, 11, ii. 12. Compare the famous remarks of Tertullian, *Apol.* 50, "Plures efficimur, quoties metimur; semen est sanguis Christianorum."

[2] *Infern.* ii. 33.

the innocent the crimes of themselves and of their gods!"

At the very time when Justin began to feel these favourable leanings to a noble and persecuted cause he met a teacher—Tillemont and others have even fancied that it must have been an angel in disguise—who gave him the impulse which resulted in his complete conversion.

Justin was at some city near the sea, perhaps Ephesus, and with his mind full of deep thoughts and questions, he had retired to a lonely field not far from the shore to meditate. He expected to be left undisturbed to his own musings; but as he paced up and down he observed that he was being followed at no great distance by a fine-looking old man of meek and venerable manners. Surprised at the intrusion, he turned round and fixed his eyes on him rather keenly

"Do you know me?" asked the old man.

"No," replied Justin.

"Why then do you gaze on me so fixedly?"

"Because," said Justin, "I did not expect to meet anyone in so quiet a spot as this."

"I have come," answered the old man, "to look after some of my household who have left me. But why are you here?"

Justin told him that he had come there for uninterrupted meditation, that he might give himself, without distraction, to the exercise of reason.[1] The old man asked him whether then he set reason above practice,

[1] I abbreviate Justin's account of this conversation, as given in his Dialogue with Trypho, c. 2. Compare the account given by Tatian of his own conversion in his oration to the Greeks, c. 29. He too was won to Christianity by "certain barbaric writings too old to be compared with the opinion of the Greeks, and too divine to be compared with their errors."

and aimed at being a Sophist rather than a man of action? Justin replied by pointing out that there need be no contrast between a student of reason and a practical man, and by a defence of the supreme importance of philosophy to ennoble and give significance to the whole course of common life. But his Socratic querist interrupted him with the inquiry, "Whether philosophy conferred happiness"; and on being answered in the affirmative, he asked, "What is philosophy? and what is happiness?" Justin answered "that philosophy is the full knowledge of reality and the clear perception of truth, and happiness the reward of such knowledge and such wisdom."

"But what do you call God?" said the old man; to which Justin replied by defining God as the changeless cause of all other things.

The old man listened approvingly, but asked whether the religious knowledge of things human and divine was not something different from the knowledge of any ordinary art? If so, was it possible to know God without hearing from one who had seen Him? How then could the philosophers judge correctly about God, when they had neither heard Him nor seen Him at any time?

Justin answered that God, according to Plato's true doctrine, could not be seen by the eyes, but only discerned by the mind, and then only when the mind was pure and well-disposed.

"Is the soul then divine and immortal," replied he, "and a part of that very regal mind? and can we become happy by mentally conceiving of the Deity? And if so, does the same remark apply to the souls of animals?"

"No," said Justin, "for it does not even apply to the majority of men, but only to the just and pure."

Following his dialectical method, the old man pressed Justin with the question, "Why then should not goats or sheep see God, since they injure no one?" and he thought that the animals might fairly ridicule the reply that *their* bodies were any obstacle to this, since the bodies of men were not.

But dropping this point, he asks Justin, "Whether the soul can see God while it is in the body, or afterwards?" Justin thinks it possible now in part, but more especially hereafter. "But how can that be," insinuates his interrogator, "if, as Plato taught, the soul had a previous existence, and yet retains no spontaneous reminiscence of it?[1] And what is to be the *punishment* of those who have not seen God?" Justin answers from Plato that "they are imprisoned in the bodies of certain wild beasts." "But if they do not know the reason for their punishment, they neither profited by that punishment nor are conscious of it," argues the old man; and he considers this remark a sufficient refutation of the whole Platonic theory of the Vision of Abstract Being and of the Transmigration of Souls. At the same time he admits that souls *can* perceive *that God exists*, and that righteousness and piety are honourable.

Further, he proves to Justin that the philosophers really know nothing about the soul, and have no right to call it immortal, since the world is created, and therefore souls also. Not that all souls die, which would be "truly a piece of good fortune to the evil." "The souls of the righteous remain in a better place, while those of the unjust and wicked are in a worse, waiting for the Judgment. Thus some which have appeared worthy of God never die; *but others are punished so long as God wills them to exist and to be punished.*" Justin com-

[1] The old man simply hints at this Platonic ἀνάμνησις.

pares this opinion with that of Plato in the Timaeus, and refers to Plato and Pythagoras as "men who have been as a wall and fortress of philosophy to us." The old man however says that their opinions and those of any other man make no matter to him, since reason proves that the soul partakes of life because God so wills it, and that "whenever the soul must cease to exist, the spirit of life is removed from it." He then refers Justin to teachers more ancient than the philosophers, who spake by the Divine Spirit, and foretold the future. They did not *demonstrate* the truth, but witnessed to it; and their credentials are the predictions they uttered, and the miracles which they performed.[1] He ends by saying, "But pray above all things that the gates of light may be opened to you; for these things cannot be perceived or understood by all, but only by the man to whom God and His Christ have imparted wisdom."

After this and other admonitions, the aged Christian went away, and Justin never saw him again. "But straightway a flame was kindled in my soul; and a love of the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ, possessed me; and whilst revolving his words in my mind, I found this philosophy alone to be safe and profitable. Thus and for this reason I am a philosopher. Moreover, I would wish that all, making a resolution similar to my own, would not keep themselves away from the words of the Saviour. For they possess a terrible power in themselves, and are sufficient to inspire those who turn aside from the path of rectitude with awe; while the sweetest rest is afforded those who make a diligent practice of them."

[1] Hence the immense predominance of the argument from prophecy in Justin's writings. He regards the evidential force of even Christ's miracles as chiefly dependent on prophecy. Semisch, in his *Justin Martyr*,

If Justin did not intend the framework of his Dialogue with Trypho to be a fiction, he has given us in this deeply interesting passage a history of the final moment of his conversion. Even if the exact circumstances were different, we clearly have here a description of the mental processes which ended in his abandonment of Pagan philosophy.[1] In the last sentence he has foreshadowed the remainder of his life. He continued still to be a philosopher; he still wore the threadbare cloak which distinguished a philosopher;[2] but he now regarded Christianity as the only true philosophy. His garb was not a useless piece of affectation, for men who saw him thus clad sometimes, like Trypho, addressed him with the words, "Hail, philosopher!" and thus furnished an opportunity for him to carry on the work of a Christian evangelist or missionary, to which henceforth he seems to have devoted the active efforts of his life. Such wandering teachers were, as we learn from the *Didachè*, familiar figures in the communities of early Christians. They were not always ordained, for it was considered sufficient if they showed that they had the gifts of the Spirit. Whether Justin himself was ordained is more than doubtful. It is nowhere asserted by any contemporary or ancient authority, and although it has been inferred from his expressions about baptism, where he uses the first person plural, the "we" and "us" in

ii. 111, shows how many passages Justin applied to Christ, which modern interpretation knows to be incapable of such application.

[1] It is of course possible that Justin in his Dialogue may have copied the fictitious setting of the Platonic dialogues; but the artlessness of the style leads to the conclusion that he is describing a conversation which really took place under the circumstances which he mentions. See Kaye, *On the Writings of Justin*, p. 19. Nothing is known of the Marcus Pompeius to whom the Dialogue is addressed.

[2] *Dial.* i. Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 11. Heraclas, Bishop of Alexandria, did the same, and Tertullian also assumed the *pallium*.

those passages are clearly generic.[1] There is not the least trace that Justin took personal part in the functions of holy worship. He regarded it as his duty to be a teacher. Speaking of Christians in general, he says (with reference to Ezek. iii. 17-19), "On this account we are, through fear, very earnest in desiring to converse with men according to the Scriptures, but not from love of money, or of glory, or of pleasure."[2] He tells Trypho that, in spite of his quibbles and cavils, he will continue to argue with him. "And, in fact," he says, "I do the very same to all men of every nation, who wish to examine along with me, or address any inquiry to me regarding this subject."

Accordingly Justin, after his conversion, does not seem to have confined himself to one settled home. The genuineness of the "Exhortation to the Greeks" is disputed, but it is likely enough that — as is there narrated—he saw at Alexandria the ruined cells on the island of the Pharos, which the Egyptian guides pointed out in proof of the fable about the miraculous origin of the Septuagint translation.[3] Nor is it unlikely that he may have seen at Cumae the "very large basilica cut out of one stone, a vast affair, and worthy of all admiration," which was shown him as the place where the inspired Cumaean Sibyl bathed, and uttered her oracles. We also learn from Eusebius that at one time he was living at Ephesus, and we know from the Second Apology that he lived for some time at Rome.

[1] *Apol.* i. 61. "Then they are brought *by us* where there is water," id. 65. "But *we*, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced."

[2] *Dial.* c. 82.

[3] *Cohort. ad Graec.* 13. The story was that each of the seventy translators had been shut up in a separate cell, and under supernatural inspiration had each made a complete and exactly coincident translation of the Old Testament into Greek.

During his residence at Rome he had among his hearers the perverse but able Tatian, who speaks of him as a man worthy of the highest admiration (θαυμασιώτατος). Tatian's arrogance only developed into hyperasceticism after Justin's death. Justin however was himself, according to Epiphanius, a severe ascetic.[1]

He must probably have seen at Rome the famous statue to the Sabine god *Semo Sancus*, which, by a mistake, perfectly pardonable in a Samaritan Greek, he took for a statue to Simon Magus — "the holy god Simon" — reading

Simoni Deo Sancto

for

Semoni Sanco Deo.

That he really did fall into this error is rendered almost certain by the marble fragment, bearing this inscription, which was dug up in the island of the Tiber in 1574, and which probably was the base of this very statue. Justin knew that Simon Magus was worshipped by "almost all the Samaritans, and a few even of other nations," and he therefore imagined that the statue "which was erected on the River Tiber, between the two bridges," was in honour of the heresiarch of whom he had heard so much among his compatriots. It was not to be expected that Justin should be acquainted with a forgotten mythology which was unfamiliar to all except professed antiquarians.[2]

It was during this residence at the capital of the Empire that Justin became entangled in controversies with a Cynic philosopher named Crescens, of whom he

[1] μεγάλως ἐξασκηθείς.

[2] He has misled a multitude of followers, Iren. *Haer.* i. 123. Tert. *Apologet.* 13. Euseb. *H. E.* ii. 13. Aug. *De Haer.* i. etc. Hippolytus, however, in the *Philosophumena*, omits all mention of the statue, and as a learned Roman perhaps knew that the story was founded on a mistake.

speaks in the second Apology. He describes him as "a lover of bravado and boasting (φιλόψοφος καὶ φιλόκομπος), not worthy of the name of a philosopher,"[1] and accuses him of ignorant railing against the Christians, whom he called "atheists" and "impious" in order to win the deluded mob. There were even illiterate persons who refrained from such conduct, but Crescens was not only illiterate but depraved. Justin, on questioning him, found that in reality he knew nothing and understood nothing about Christianity. He was perfectly ready to refute his slanders in the presence of the Emperor or any competent judge. He had, however, little hope of influencing him. "It is," he says, "impossible for a Cynic, who makes indifference his end, to know any good but indifference;" and he expected that through the influence of Crescens he would himself be "plotted against and fixed to the stake."

The result which he feared was speedily accomplished, although we have nothing but conjecture to connect his death with the machinations of Crescens. His Second Apology was wrung from him by the spectacle of the wrongs inflicted upon Christians under Urbicus the praefect of the city.[2] He begins by narrating one of them. A woman, herself of dubious character, was married to a dissolute Pagan, but having been converted to Christianity, tried to wean her husband from his evil courses. In this she entirely failed, and as the conduct of her husband was disgraceful, she wished to be divorced from him. Her friends, however, persuaded her against

[1] *Apol.* ii. 3. See Tatian, *Orat.* 19.

[2] *Apol.* ii. 1, 2. This Urbicus was the Lollius Urbicus who conquered the Britons in the reign of Antoninus Pius. According to Borghesi (*Œuvres*, viii. 547), Urbicus was succeeded by P. Salvius Julianus, and he in A.D. 163 by Q. Junius Rusticus, under whom Justin was martyred; but there is no certainty in these dates.

taking this step; and, doing violence to her own feelings, she continued to live with him. Shortly afterwards her husband went to Alexandria, and the account which she received of his conduct was so revolting that she could no longer imperil her soul by continuing to live with him. He, on the other hand, instead of rejoicing at the conversion which had changed her from a reprobate woman into a chaste matron, revenged himself upon her by denouncing her as a Christian. She appealed to the Emperor, and was granted time for her defence; whereupon the husband assailed her teacher Ptolemaeus, and induced the centurion who had thrown him into prison to confine his interrogatories to the single point whether Ptolemaeus was a Christian or not. He confessed, was tried before Urbicus, and was condemned to death. Indignant at so gross an act of injustice, another Christian, named Lucius, remonstrated with Urbicus upon the shamefulness of putting a man to death when no single crime was laid to his charge. Thereupon the angry praefect charged Lucius also with being a Christian. He immediately confessed the fact, and he too was led away to execution, thanking God for delivering him from a world of such wicked rulers. And, after this, "still a third, having come forward, was condemned to be punished."[1]

We know nothing more about Justin unless we can accept as genuine the little account of "The Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs Justin, Chariton, Charito, Paeon, and Liberianus, who suffered at Rome." It is preserved by Symeon Metaphrastes, and is so simple and manly in character, that, although its genuineness cannot be pronounced above suspicion, there is strong reason for

[1] Justin attributed to "the demons" the "unreasoning passion" with which the heathen calumniated and persecuted the Christians. *Apol.* i. 5.

accepting its testimony on grounds of internal evidence.

Rusticus was then praefect of the city, and when the martyrs were brought before his judgment-seat he said to Justin, as the most distinguished of their number, "Obey the gods at once, and submit to the kings."[1] Justin replied that by obeying Christ they did no wrong. "What, then, are your doctrines?" asked Rusticus. Justin replied that, after trying all doctrines, he had accepted those of the Christians as true. After sneering at him as a wretch, Rusticus asked further what the main dogma was, and Justin replied by stating his belief in one God, and in Jesus Christ His Son, foretold by the prophets, "the Herald of salvation and Teacher of good disciples"; and, "I being a man," he added, "think what I can say is insignificant in comparison with his boundless divinity."

"Where do you assemble?" demanded the praefect.

"Where each one chooses and can," replied Justin. "The God of the Christians is not circumscribed by space."

Being further questioned as to where he himself worshipped, Justin said that he lived "above one Martin at the Timiotinian bath," and that although this was his second residence at Rome, he knew of no other place of assemblage. "And if any one wished to come to me, I communicated to him the doctrines of truth."

"Are you not then a Christian?"

"Yes, I am a Christian."

Rusticus then questioned Chariton, the woman Charito, Euelpistus a slave of Cæsar, Hierax, and Paeon. Questioned whether it was Justin who had made them

[1] Perhaps the Emperor Antoninus Pius, and his colleagues and adopted sons, M. Aurelius and Lucius Verus.

Christians, they answered vaguely, or said that they had learned Christianity from their parents, in Cappadocia, Phrygia, or elsewhere, though Euelpistus acknowledged that he "willingly heard the words of Justin."

"Hearken," said the praefect to Justin, "you who are called learned, and think that you know true doctrines; if you are scourged and beheaded, do you believe you will ascend into heaven?"[1]

Justin. "I hope that if I endure these things I shall have His gifts. For I know that to all who have thus lived, there abides the divine favour until the completion of the whole world."

Rusticus. "Do you suppose, then, that you will ascend into heaven to receive some recompense?"

Justin. "I do not suppose it, but I know and am fully persuaded of it."

To cut matters short Rusticus ordered them all to sacrifice to the gods.

Justin. "No right-thinking person falls away from piety to impiety."

Rusticus. "Unless ye obey ye shall be mercilessly punished."

Justin replied that their punishment would become to them salvation, and confidence at the more fearful and universal judgment-seat of our Lord and Saviour. "Do what you will," said the other martyrs, "for we are Christians, and do not sacrifice to idols."

Rusticus then pronounced the formal sentence of scourging and decapitation "according to the laws"; and the holy martyrs, having glorified God, were

[1] Dr. Donaldson (*The Apologists*, p. 72) points out that this is the earliest occurrence of the phrase "going to heaven," and "it is remarkable that it is a heathen, and probably a Stoic, who uses the words."

beheaded at the accustomed place. "And some of the faithful, having secretly removed their bones, laid them in a suitable place."

Such is the manly narrative of Justin's martyrdom, which contrasts very favourably with most martyrologies in its straightforward simplicity, and in the absence of monkish miracles and superstitious relic-worship. We know nothing further. The date is uncertain. Epiphanius says that Justin died at the age of fifty in the reign of Hadrian, which is altogether improbable. Dr. Hort, in a monograph on the subject, fixes the date at about A.D. 148; the *Paschal Chronicle* in A.D. 165;[1] Borghesi in A.D. 163.

To such a fate Justin had long looked forward with heroic constancy. There was something nobler than Stoicism in his repeated statement to the heathen, "You can *kill* us, *injure* us you cannot," and in the warning that by inflicting martyrdom on Christians they did but injure themselves, while they conferred the highest of all blessings upon those whom they meant to harm.

Justin was a voluminous writer, and a man of wider general culture than any of the Christian writers who preceded him. Many of the writings attributed to him are unquestionably spurious.[2] The two Apologies and the Dialogue with Trypho are certainly genuine, and some of the Fragments. The Short Discourse to the Greeks,[3] the Exhortation to the Greeks,[4] and the book

[1] *Journ. of Classical and Sacred Philol.* June 1856.

[2] For instance, *the Epistle to Diognetus; An Exposition of the True Faith; the Replies to the Orthodox*, etc.

[3] It differs from Justin's style, and in a Syriac translation, published by Cureton, seems to be attributed to a certain Ambrose.

[4] The tone is harsher, the knowledge of philosophy more second

On the Sole Government of God,[1] may be by him, but their genuineness is matter of extreme doubt. They differ both in style and tone from those of his writings which are known to be authentic.

Although the Two Apologies, as they are now named and printed, are the work of Justin, they are probably not the two meant by Eusebius, for he says that one of them was addressed to Marcus Aurelius. It is now generally believed that the Second Apology is no longer extant, and that what is now *called* the Second Apology was, in reality, the preface and continuation of the First. Eusebius says that it was written about A.D. 140, and although there are some difficulties in the prefatory addresses, we may regard the date as approximately correct.[2]

The reverence felt by the early Church for Justin was well deserved. He was not a deep thinker, nor an eloquent writer, nor even a very powerful reasoner; but he was a man of wide reading, of beautiful candour, of childlike simplicity. Nothing is more observable in his character than his transparent truthfulness.[3] He was a brave Christian, full of faith and holiness and glowing zeal. That he falls into uncritical mistakes cannot be denied. He was not superior in this respect to other writers of his day, both Christian and Pagan. Besides his mistake about Semo Sancus, he makes Ptolemy send copies of the Septuagint to Herod;[4] he was duped by

hand. Certain resemblances to, perhaps quotations from, Africanus, make it probable that the work was written long after Justin's time (Donaldson, *The Apologists*, p. 103), and the opinions of the writer on the origin of heathen wisdom and of Polytheism are not those of Justin.

[1] Largely composed of quotations from Greek poets—Æschylus, Philemon, pseudo-Orpheus, Euripides, Menander, etc.

[2] See the allusions in *Apol.* i. 26, 31, 46.

[3] "I am not such a wretch, Trypho, as to speak differently from what I think."

[4] Id. i. 31.

the imaginary cells of the seventy Greek translators at Alexandria; and he quotes as genuine the Acts of Pilate[1] and the prophecies of the Sibyl.[2] He was, like others of his age, a millenarian.[3] In this respect he simply stood on the ordinary level of his times, while in his knowledge of the best literature of the Greeks, and the sacred books of the Hebrews, he was far superior to all but a few of his contemporaries.[4]

His first Apology after the introduction (1, 2) falls into three divisions—(1) A refutation of the attacks upon Christians for holding an unlawful religion; for Atheism; for the fact that some Christians were malefactors; and for aiming at a kingdom (3-22). (2) A defence of Christian doctrine against various objections —such as that they had no valid evidence for the divinity of Christ, that their belief led to fatalism, and was a new thing in the world (23-61). (3) An explanation of the doctrines and customs of Christianity—such as the Eucharist and the observance of Sunday. He ends by quoting the rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundanus, which at least gave Christians a claim to a fair trial. His second Apology deals largely with the sufferings of Christians, their innocence, their constancy, and the reasons why God permitted them to suffer. The Dialogue is devoted to the proof that the Mosaic Law is no longer binding; that Christ is the Son of God; and that Christians are now the true sons of Abraham.

As regards the theology of Justin, it has always seemed to me a mistaken plan to draw out the expressions of the early Fathers into elaborate systems by means of exorbitant inferences. In the first and second

[1] *Apol.* i. 35, 48. [2] Id. i. 44. [3] *Dial.* 80, 81.
[4] He must have known at least *something* of Hebrew. Id. i. 33.

centuries the theology of Christianity had not yet crystallised into rigid formulae, as it afterwards did under the necessity of guarding against elaborate heretical attacks. The language is still, so to speak, fluid and untechnical.

Justin's views of the Trinity were as definite as those of any of the early writers. It would be unreasonable to expect from him a complete Christology, or a full theory of the Atonement;[1] but he speaks of Christ as God, though subordinate to the Father,[2] and often calls Him "the Word." He regards Him as being both human and divine,[3] and born of a Virgin.[4] He also believed in the Holy Ghost.[5] The most fruitful and original of Justin's opinions is that concerning the λόγος σπερματικὸς, the germinal Word, the Word which is sown as a seed in the hearts of all men. Of this Word he regarded all in the whole race of man as partakers, and to it he attributed all that was good in the souls of the heathen. It made them, as it were, Christians by nature, even when they had not heard of Christ.[6] Perhaps, however, his Platonic training had taught Him to think of God more from the philosophic standpoint as abstract Being than from the New Testament standpoint of love. But it must be remembered that Justin lived before the age of developed heretical controversy, and as Augustine says, "many things pertaining to the

[1] *Dial.* 56, 58, 75, 113, 125.

[2] Id. 85, 100, 126, 127, etc. Some of Justin's expressions concerning the subordination of the Son (ἐν δευτέρᾳ χώρᾳ, *Apol.* ii. 13) would have been looked on with suspicion in the Post-Nicene Age. See *Dial.* 62.

[3] Id. 103, etc. [4] Id. 54, 63, 84, etc.

[5] His expressions about the Holy Spirit are a little fluctuating (Id. 56), and there is some vagueness as to the relations between the Spirit and the Word (*Apol.* i. 33).

[6] See Id. i. 46, ii. 8, 13, τὸ ἔμφυτον πάντι γένει ἀνθρώπων σπέρμα τοῦ λόγου.

Catholic faith, while in course of agitation by the hot restlessness of heretics, are, with a view to defence against them, weighed more carefully, understood more clearly, and preached more earnestly."

He frequently alludes to Angels, and one passage has even been pressed into the meaning that he approved of angel-worship; but though the phraseology is loose, it probably bears no such meaning.[1]

The Demons play a very large part in Justin's system. His demonology is as follows: The devil, once a leading angel, was cast out of heaven for betraying God, and is identified with the Serpent.[2] The other evil angels fell by illicit unions with the daughters of men, and their children are the demons. With these he identifies the gods of the heathen, and thinks that the lewd tales of heathen mythology were derived from the actual misdeeds of the demons.[3] Thus he thinks, with Milton, that the "false-titled sons of God" were the real authors of the scapes connected with the names of

> "Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter or Pan,
> Satyr or Faun, or Sylvan;"

and with the wooers of

> "Calisto, Clymene,
> Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
> Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more."

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[1] *Apol.* i. 6. "But we reverence and worship (σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν) both Him and the Son that came from Him, and who taught me these things, and the host of the other good Angels who follow Him and are made like unto Him, and the prophetic Spirit, honouring them in word and in truth." The apparent attribution of the same worship to the Angels as well as to the Father, Son, and Spirit, as well as the phrase "the *other* good Angels," is probably due merely to Justin's careless style. The two verbs, by a sort of zeugma, are used in different senses with the different substantives.

[2] It is in propounding this view that Justin gives his extraordinary derivation of Satan from *sata*, "apostate," and *nas*, "serpent." See *Apol.* i. 28, *Dial.* 103, 112.

[3] See *Apol.* i. 9, ii. 5; *Dial.* 79-124, etc.

Intent on the deception of mankind, the demons also parodied the prophecies and facts and rites of Christ,[1] and lent their aid to the founders of heresies like Simon Magus, Menander,[2] and Marcion.[3] He regards them as the authors of war, murder, uncleanness, magic, and all wickedness, and represents them as living in constant antagonism to God and Christ.[4] They are the inspirers of the calumnies against the Christians, and of the hatred and persecution of the best men, whether heathen philosophers (such as Heraclitus, Socrates, and "in our own times," Musonius) or Christians.[5] He has much more about the demons to the same effect. Their prominence is one of the characteristic points of his teaching.

Of "the Church" Justin says scarcely anything. Unlike Ignatius and Irenaeus he has nothing to remark about bishops, knowing no church officer except a president (ὁ προεστὼς) and deacons,[6] and recognising the universal priesthood of all Christians under the one great High Priest, Christ.[7] The order of service which he describes is of the simplest character — Scripture lessons, a sermon, a prayer offered up standing, an extempore thanksgiving, an offertory, and a weekly celebration of the Eucharist. Of the bread and wine he uses, in one passage, language which lends itself to false views,[8] though he excludes the notion which regards

[1] *Apol.* i. 54, 62, 64 ; *Dial.* 69. Among other curious illustrations he considers that the erection of statues of Persephone at fountains arise from a mistake about Gen. i. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters!" [2] *Apol.* i. 56.

[3] Id. i. 58. Justin does not often draw any *marked* distinction between the evil angels and the demons, speaking mainly of the latter.

[4] See Id. i. 5, 21, 25, etc.

[5] Id. i. 8 ; *Dial.* 39, 116. [6] *Apol.* i. 67. [7] *Dial.* 116.

[8] *Apol.* i. 66. The language, as Dr. M. Dods says, is so inexact, that it is claimed alike by Calvinists, Lutherans, and Romanists ; and in *Dial.* 117 he says that Christians, by their solid and liquid food, effect a *memorial* by which the sufferings of Christ are *brought to mind*.

the Lord's supper as a material sacrifice.[1] But his expressions are vague, metaphorical, and inexact.[2] Probably he had no very distinct views on a subject which Scripture has left undefined. Most Christians of that day, if closely questioned as to their theory about the sacramental elements, would probably have been content with the words traditionally attributed to Queen Elizabeth—

> "Christ was the Word that spake it;
> He took the bread and brake it,
> And what that word did make it
> That I believe and take it."

Like many in the first two centuries Justin was a Chiliast. He believed in a literal millennium heralded by the return of the veritable Elijah,[3] and he endeavoured to prove his opinion from Isaiah and the Apocalypse. In speaking of the future state he uses the current metaphors. He nowhere calls punishment endless (*ἀΐδιος*), but eternal (*αἰώνιος*); yet it cannot be proved that he was at all aware of the true philosophic meaning of *αἰώνιος* as a word expressive of quality and exclusive of—or rather the absolute antithesis to—time. He says that demons and wicked men will be punished for a "boundless age,"[4] but in some passages he seems to be at least uncertain whether God may not will that evil souls should cease to exist.[5]

His view of Inspiration is singular. Like Barnabas, he depreciates the Law and Circumcision as a mere accommodation to the Jews caused by their peculiar wickedness. But he quotes very largely from the Old Testament, and insists emphatically on the inspiration

[1] *Dial.* 117. "Now that *prayers and giving of thanks* when offered by worthy men are *the only* perfect and well-meaning sacrifices to God, I admit." [2] *Justin Martyr and Athenagoras*, p. 64. [3] *Dial.* 49, 80, 81. [4] See *Apol.* i. 8, 12, 18, 28, 52.; ii. 9. [5] *Dial.* 5, 6.

of the Prophets.[1] Yet he asserts no less emphatically the inspiration of the Sibyls, of Hystaspes, and of the very faulty Greek version.[2] And he quotes the words of Scripture very carelessly, and expounds them in a most arbitrary and untenable manner. Allowing the force and skill with which he proves from the Old Testament that Christ was both a suffering and a Divine Messiah, it must be said that in exegesis he is at his very weakest. He tries to force every passage of the Old Testament into a prophecy of Christ by means which every instructed person would now instantly reject. To give but a single specimen, he says that, as "Jacob served Laban for speckled and many-spotted sheep," so "Christ served, even to the slavery of the cross, for the various and many-formed races of mankind."[3] "Rachel is our Church. . . . Rachel stole the gods of Laban, and has hid them to this day, and we have lost our paternal and maternal gods."[4] As Middleton said, he sees an emblem of the Cross in "every stick or piece of wood" which the Old Testament mentions.[5] Like Barnabas, he holds this method of interpretation to spring from a special gift (*χάρισμα*) of knowledge (*γνῶσις*); and it is in point of fact essentially Gnostic, except that it was applied to support innocent or true conclusions. He was thus easily able to get rid of all moral difficulties which the Old Testament presents. Polygamy and Judah's incest are not matters for

[1] He is the first to use the celebrated comparison of inspiration to the plectrum which strikes the lyre, if the Exhortation to the Greeks be genuine—*Cohort ad Graec.* 8. Comp. *Apol.* i. 36. The metaphor was afterwards used by Montanus (Epiphan. *Haer.* xlviii. 4).

[2] *Apol.* i. 44, 31. He most erroneously charges the Jews with obliterating four passages from the Septuagint, of which three do not exist in any MS., and the fourth only in a few (*Dial.* 72, 73).

[3] See Semisch, i. p. 299. [4] *Dial.* 134.

[5] Id. 40-44, 86. Comp. 113, 132, 273.

blame at all, because they are not apparently actual crimes, but "dispensations of great secrets."[1] None of the Fathers were aware that the allegoric method of interpretation, which they regarded as corresponding to the "Vivifying Spirit," not to the "killing letter," was far more favourable for heretical than for orthodox purposes; was not Christian but Jewish; and was not even originally Jewish, but Pagan, having been borrowed by Philo and his predecessors from Stoic methods of manipulating Homer. It was necessitated by a false and mechanical notion of inspiration which had itself been borrowed, not from the Prophets, but from the philosophers; not from Scripture, but from Plato.

Strange to say, however, Justin only quotes one book of the New Testament by name—the Apocalypse.[2] He refers to the Gospels generally, and seldom verbally, as "Memoirs of the Apostles," without naming them;[3] and he adds to them a few particulars—such as that Christ was born in a cave,[4] that a fire was kindled in the Jordan at His baptism,[5] and that as a carpenter at Nazareth he made yokes and ploughs.[6] These statements are found in the Apocryphal Gospels, but Justin may have derived them from current tradition. Of the various "unwritten sayings" of Christ which have so deep an interest, Justin records but one—"*In whatsoever I find you, in that will I judge you.*"[7] From a passage in the Dialogue with Trypho he seems to have held that with the Old Covenant *special* inspiration ceased, while the universal inspiration of all true believers began with the coming of Christ.[8]

[1] *Dial.* 112, 134, 141, 86, *ad fin.* [2] Id. 81.

[3] Wescott, *On the Canon*, p. 200. His knowledge of the Gospel of St. John is probable, but can hardly be demonstrated.

[4] *Dial.* 78. [5] Id. 88. [6] Id. 88. [7] Id. 47.

[8] Id. 87. Ἀνεπαύσατο οὖν (τὸ πνεῦμα) ἐλθόντος ἐκείνου, κ.τ.λ.

Perhaps the peculiar exigencies of his controversy with heathens and Jews prevented him from appealing to the New Testament writings as though they stood on the same level with the Old; but it is a singular circumstance that he appeals to the Prophets in proof of the statements of the Apostles.[1] He seems to consider that every doctrine and fact of Christianity was implicitly contained in the Old Testament, and only required the interpretation of "knowledge" to bring it forth. The consequence is that he sees "prophecies" where no vestige of any prophecy exists.[2] Yet his testimony to our present canon is most important. It can be proved with all but certainty that he was acquainted with the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke; and it is at least highly probable that he had read the Gospel, as well as the First Epistle of St. John, and the chief Epistles of St. Paul.

A very beautiful feature of Justin's writings is his remarkable tolerance. Many of the Fathers speak in language of utter hatred and scorn of the heathen in general, and have nothing but the bitterest contempt for their poets and philosophers. Not so Justin. He had not approached Christianity through the narrow portal of Judaic traditions which had become petrified into ceremonies and abounded with anathemas. His doctrine of the Germinal Word enabled him to do full justice to ethnic virtue and inspiration, and to regard with hopefulness God's acceptance of those heathen who had lived in accordance with the light vouchsafed to them. This belief was one which became nobly fruitful in the writings of the later Alexandrians. Christ was to

[1] See especially *Apol.* i. 33.

[2] Thus he takes Is. v. 20 as a *prophecy* that Christians would be slandered. Id. i. 49.

them the Eternal Wisdom mingling with the purest elements of humanity, "as the perfume with the flower, as the salt with the waters of the sea." In the system of Justin—who, however, only makes use of the conception in his *Apologies*—it constitutes "the transition-link between Christianity and everything true and good in the times antecedent to Christianity." It enabled him to form a candid and liberal judgment of the Greek philosophy, and to give a fair and impartial statement even of the opinions which he censures.[1]

[1] See Neander, ii. 450, *e.t.*

V

TERTULLIAN

"Quid Tertulliano eruditius? quid acutius?"—Jer. *Ep.* 83.

The Church of Palestine after the death of the Apostles produced scarcely any writer of note, with the possible exception of Hegesippus. The Church of Syria was rendered illustrious by the fame of Ignatius and Theophilus, of Lucian and Dorotheus, the precursors of the famous school of Antioch. From the Churches of Asia Minor sprang Polycrates, Polycarp, Papias, and Melito; from the Churches in Greece, Quadratus, Aris-

Editions and Lives of Tertullian.

The most serviceable edition of Tertullian's works is that of Oehler, 3 tom. Leipz. 1851. The references in the following pages are to the convenient edition of E. F. Leopold, Lips. 1839. Among other books on Tertullian, his life and writings, we may mention—Neander, *Antignosticus*, 2d ed. Berlin, 1847; Grotemeyer, *Ueber Tertullians Leben und Schriften*, Kempten, 1863; Hauck, *Tertullians Leben und Schriften*, Erlangen, 1877; Ebert, *Tertullians Verhältniss zu Minuc. Felix*, Leipz. 1868; Rönsch, *Das Neue Testament Tertullians*, Leipz. 1871; Bonwetsch, *Die Schriften Tertullians nach der Zeit ihrer Abfassung*. For the history and tenets of Montanism, see the works of Wernsdorf, Bonwetsch, Münter, and De Soyres, quoted *infra;* Tertullian's later writings; Euseb. *H. E.* v. 3; Epiphan. *Haer.* 48, 49; Renan, *Marc. Aurèle*, pp. 207-225; and *Le Montanisme*, *Rev. des deux Mondes*, Feb. 1881; Neander, *Ch. Hist.* ii. 232-260; Walch, *Ketzerhistorie*, i. 611-666; Schwegler, *Der Montanismus*, Tübingen, 1841; and the ordinary Church Histories, most of which are too unfavourable. See too Réville, *La Religion à Rome sous les Sévères.*

tides, Athenagoras, and Dionysius of Corinth. From Alexandria, as some counterpoise to the seething heresies of Basilides and Valentinus, sprang Pantaenus, the venerable founder of the school of Alexandria, who was followed by Clement and the illustrious Origen. The early Church of Rome could glory in Clemens, Hermas, Caius, and Hippolytus, who all however wrote in Greek.[1] Irenaeus and the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne shed lustre upon the Church of Southern Gaul. But none of the Christian Churches in the first and second centuries exercised a more powerful influence than that of Northern Africa. It gave to the common faith its earliest Latin translation of the Bible, which, though often called the *Vetus Itala*, "was made probably in Africa and for Africa, not in Rome and for Rome." It trained Minucius Felix,[2] and the learned, eloquent, passionate Tertullian, who was succeeded in the third century by Cyprian, and in the fourth by Arnobius[3] and Augustine. Though it originated we know not how, and vanished like a dream in the storm of barbarian invasion, no Church rendered more memorable services to the development of Christian thought, with the single exception of the Church of Alexandria.

From the numerous writings of Tertullian we may learn much respecting the condition of religion in his

[1] Only four Roman bishops are mentioned by Jerome among his 136 church writers—Clement, Victor, Cornelius, and Damasus.

[2] Minucius Felix, the eloquent author of *Octavius*, was born at Cirta in North Africa (*Octav.* 9), but nothing is known of his personal life. The date of the *Octavius* is uncertain, but it was probably written about A.D. 200. Tertullian began to write about A.D. 190.

[3] The Apology of Arnobius was written A.D. 303. He was a professor of rhetoric at Sicca in Africa, a Pagan idolater, versed in philosophy, and an active opponent of Christianity. He was converted partly by witnessing the constancy of the martyrs, partly by a dream. He wrote his *Disputationes adversus Gentes* to convince the Christians of his sincerity. Lactantius was his pupil.

day. They have been called "Tracts for the Times," and while they enable us to form a vivid conception of the man himself, at once in his greatness and in his littleness, they also show the various gusts and storms of opinion which swept the Church towards the close of the second century.

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, as his name is given in the manuscripts of his works,[1] is well known to us in his personality, because that is stamped upon every page which he wrote; but he has not told us many details of his biography, and we learn but little from the meagre and uncertain notices of Eusebius and Jerome.[2] He was born about A.D. 160, and was the son of a centurion in the service of the Proconsul. He tells us that his father had witnessed the crucifixion of priests of Saturn who immolated infants, and were executed by the Proconsul under the trees which had overshadowed their crimes.[3] His parents were heathen, and they must have been in sufficiently easy circumstances to give to their son a liberal education. He could not only read Greek, but could write it with facility.[4] "We still remember Homer," he says in his book *To the Gentiles*,[5] and he shows great familiarity with heathen poetry and mythology, as well as some acquaintance with philosophy. For philosophy and philosophers, however, he felt a profound contempt, and he never took the trouble to understand their systems, though in a superficial way he had perhaps read much about them in such books as that of Diogenes Laertius. He speaks with scorn of even the greatest philosophers

[1] He only calls himself Tertullianus, or Sept. Tert.
[2] Euseb. *H. E.* ii. 2, 25; iii. 20. Jer. *De Vir. ill.* 53.
[3] *Apol.* 9.
[4] He wrote several books in Greek which are now lost. *De Bapt.* 15.
[5] *Ad Nat.* i. 10.

as "the patriarchs of heretics;" he curses Aristotle and calumniates Socrates.[1] "We despise," he says, "the learning of secular literature, which is reckoned as folly with God."[2] The utmost he would admit was that some of them may have had some breath of truth. His general sweeping remark is, "Philosophers aim at truth, and in doing so corrupt it. What has the Church to do with the Academy?" Of the serious Platonic studies which had enabled a Justin to knock with the philosophers at the gate of truth he knew but little.

Like other controversialists in all ages, he often seems to care more for the immediate victory than for the discovery of truth. He is often at variance with himself, because he "improvises his convictions," and is more intent on prostrating his opponent than on examining the grounds of his opinion. He wields his impetuous rhetoric like a club of Hercules, and at the same time uses his logic and sarcasm like an envenomed rapier. As a special pleader and logomachist he is as irritating as Socrates, and ten times as unfair. He frequently arouses our natural antagonism in favour of the cause against which he is pleading, because he is at once so merciless to it and so unjust.

A heathen in a heathen city was hardly likely to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.[3] Tertullian was not so happy as to avoid the taint of worldly pollution, any more than Augustine was in the same city two hundred years later. Carthage was thronged by swarms of eager youths in whose veins ran the hot blood of Africa. To these the city offered its worship, which was an apotheosis of pollution, and its

[1] *De Spect.* 18. [2] See *c. Hermog.* 8, *De Anim.* 3, *De Praescr.* 7, 30.
[3] *Apol.* 18. De vestris fuimus.

games and shows, which flung over the hideous features of vice the richest glamour of sensual temptation. But, besides this, the Paganism of Carthage seethed with exceptional abominations. The climate, the corrupt religion, the general unbelief, the lack of freedom, the absence of any scope for noble energies, the cynicism of universal sensuality were fatal influences, to which all but a very few succumbed. It would indeed have been a miracle of grace if such a youth as Tertullian had been enabled to walk unscathed in the midst of that burning fiery furnace of magic and superstition, of blood and lust.

It is a significant proof of the difference between Pagan and Christian morality that all Christian writers protested against the infamous character of the public spectacles, against which scarcely one Pagan moralist has a word to say. What pathos and indignation breathe through the sentence, "Homo, sacra res homini, jam per usum et jocum occiditur!" He calls the theatre a private consistory of uncleanness, where nothing is approved of except what is elsewhere disapproved.[1] Into its scenes were introduced the most revolting indecency. The gods were flagrantly insulted by their own votaries, and Jupiter and Mercury and Hercules were made subjects of open ridicule in plays, at which Tertullian himself had been a delighted spectator.[2] Long years after his early delight in these things, he learnt to say, "We have nothing to do, either in speech, sight, or hearing, with the madness of the circus, the impurity of the theatre, the atrocity of the arena, the emptiness of the wrestling-gallery."[3] In his heathen days he had

[1] *De Spect.* 17.

[2] *Ad Nat.* i. 10, "Vidimus saepe castratum Attin . . . risimus et meridiani ludi de deis lusum," etc.

[3] *Apolog.* 38.

never realised the wicked absurdity of funeral games, in which men consoled bereavement by murders; nor felt the criminality of dooming whole classes of human beings to anguish and infamy in order to make a holiday.[1] In days when even the throwing down of the signal-cloth by the Praetor seemed to him like the hurling headlong of the likeness of a devil, he still hardly dared to set memory a-working lest his thoughts should grow sinful again as he recalled the ungovernable blindness and tumultuous passion of men agitated to madness by their bets and their excitement as they sat at the public spectacles.[2] As for the theatres, his energy of condemnation could not be expressed more forcibly than in the sentence, "Tragedies and comedies, the bloody and lascivious fomenters of crime and lust."[3]

He begins his tract on Penitence with the words, "That class of men, to which I belonged in past times, blind, without the light of the Lord, know, so far as nature can know, that penitence is a certain passion of the mind which comes from disgust at some previous (or worse) feeling."[4] "Penitence," he says, "is life, since it is preferred to death. Rush upon it, grasp it, as a shipwrecked man grasps the aid of a plank, oh sinner like myself, yea, a less sinner than myself, for I acknowledge my pre-eminence in faults."[5] He calls penitence and full confession (*exomologesis*) the two Pharos-lights of human salvation;[6] and he says, "Since I am a sinner of all brands (*peccator omnium notarum*), and born for

[1] *De Spect.* 23. [2] Id. 16. [3] Id. 17. [4] *De Poenit.* 1. [5] Id. 4.

[6] In *De Poenit.* 9, he defines *exomologesis* (for which he borrows the Greek word) as the act by which post-baptismal penitence is manifested, "the act whereby we confess our sin *to the Lord*, not as though He knew it not, but inasmuch as by confession satisfaction is settled; by confession penitence is born; by penitence God is appeased" (see Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* vi. 5).

nothing but penitence, I cannot easily keep silence respecting that about which even Adam, the founder of the human race and of offence towards God, is not silent, restored by confession into his own Paradise."[1] In one so reticent as Tertullian about his personal religion, such expressions are a sufficient proof that he had gone astray. Nor do they stand alone. In the *Apologeticus*[2] he tells us that he too was once one of those who laughed at the old Scriptures and the judgment to come; and in his book on the resurrection of the flesh he confesses (unless his language is here meant to be general) that he had been an adulterer and had repented.[3] It must have been with deep sincerity that he begged his readers to remember in their prayers the sinner Tertullian.[4]

The date of his conversion is uncertain, but it took place after he had attained to full manhood—perhaps about A.D. 192. He has nowhere told us, as Justin and Augustine have done, what were the influences which led to the great change, but we infer from his general tone of mind that they were of a twofold character.

The nobler and better impulse came from that which he has called "the witness of a soul naturally Christian." We cannot better understand what he meant by this than by quoting his magnificent apostrophe to the soul in the first chapter of his *De Testimonio Animae.* "I summon," he says, "a new evidence, yea, one better known than all literature, more discussed than all learning, more notorious than all publications, greater than

[1] *De Poenit.* 12.

[2] 1 c. 18—"De vestris fuimus; fiunt non nascuntur Christiani."

[3] The word "adultery" may, however, be interpreted in a general sense.

[4] *De Bapt.* 20.

the whole man—I mean all which pertains to man. Take thy stand in the midst, oh soul—whether thou art received from heaven or conceived from earth, whether thou art combined of members or of atoms, whether thou beginnest with the body or art introduced after the body, whencesoever and in whatever way thou makest man a rational animal, capable in supremest measure of sense and science—stand forth! But I summon thee—not such as when moulded in schools, trained in libraries, fed in Attic academies and porches, thou blurtest forth wisdom—I address thee simple, and rude, and uncultured, and untaught, such as he possesses thee, who possesses thee and nothing else; the bare soul, just as it is from the road, the street, the weaver's shop. I need thy inexperience, since in thy poor experience, such as it is, no one places confidence. I demand those things which thou bringest with thee into man, which thou hast learnt to feel either from thine own self or from thy maker, whoever he may be. Thou art not, so far as I know, a Christian soul, for thou art wont to become, not to be born, Christian. Yet now do Christians demand a testimony from thee—from thee an alien against thine own, that they may even blush before thee because they hate and mock us on account of those things which now arrest thee as an accessory."[1]

"These testimonies of the soul," he says, "are as true as they are simple; as simple as they are common; as common as they are universal; as universal as they are natural; as natural as they are divine."[2] They involve the witness, not of the schools, but of the race in favour of the truths of Christianity. They are shown by the common language even of the heathen, who said, "God grant," and "if God will," though they worshipped

[1] *De Testim. Anim.* 1. [2] Id. 4.

many gods; and who said of a dead friend, "He has gone," implying his return; and who said "demons" when they meant to denote accursed spirits. Man's nature is universal. "God is everywhere, and the goodness of God everywhere; demon is everywhere, and the cursing of the demon everywhere; the invocation of the divine judgment is everywhere; death everywhere, and the consciousness of death everywhere; and the testimony of the soul to these things is everywhere. Every soul by its own right proclaims the things which *we* are not allowed even to whisper. Justly, therefore, every soul is a culprit and a witness, as much a culprit of error as a witness of truth, and it will stand before the courts of God on the Day of Judgment, having nothing to say. Thou proclaimedst God, and didst not seek Him; thou loathedst demons, and didst adore them; thou calledst on the judgment of God, and didst not believe that it existed; thou foresawest the punishments of hell, and didst not shun them; thou hadst a savour of Christianity, and didst persecute the Christian."

And no doubt this "testimony of the soul naturally Christian" in favour of Christianity was evoked by a conscience deeply wounded, and by the dim yearnings of a desire for good which could never be satisfied till it had received the forgiveness which Christ promised, and was filled with the fulness of God. Unrest, disgust, self-loathing, which were the self-inflicted retribution of a soul vainly trying to find satisfaction in earthly desires, drove Tertullian to seek in Christianity a peace which the world could neither give nor take away. All that was pure and noble in his religious life flowed from the fountain of penitence, which had swept him on its troubled waves to the foot of the throne of God.

Tertullian also, like other converts, was deeply impressed by the heroic constancy of Christian martyrs.[1] But other motives less true and less worthy seem to have weighed with him, and these lent to his religion a tinge of gloom and superstition. Like Justin he talks much of demons, and goes so far as to say that the unwilling oracular testimonies of demons and heathen gods have turned many to Christianity.[2] He even ventures to challenge the heathen to test the power of Christianity by a public exorcism. This is an argument which we can barely even understand, but which may have had more significance with those for whom it was written. We must say the same of the importance which he attaches to dreams and visions. When he speaks of dreams as frequently caused by demons, and yet adds that "almost the majority of men learn God from visions,"[3] we see that there was something Montanistic in his natural leanings. Tertullian assigns to fear a preponderant influence in man's conversion. His soul never quite lost the attitude of a culprit, and while he dwells on the terrors of fire and brimstone he seems to put too much in the background the loftier and sweeter motive of love, and to forget that God hath not sent us the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind. There is in his writings far too little of the spirit of love and of a sound mind; too little of the perfect love which casteth out fear because fear hath torment. The religion of men who for long years have gone astray as Tertullian did and as Augustine did, frequently gives back the lurid

[1] *Apol.* 50; *ad Scap.* 5.

[2] *Apolog.* 23, "*Haec denique testimonia deorum vestrorum Christianos facere consueverunt*, quia plurimum illis credendo Christo Domino credimus."

[3] *De Anim.* 47.

reflexion of a conscience inflamed by long defiance alike of its warnings and its threats.

Christianity does not destroy individuality, it only determines the direction and limits of its working. The vehement heathen became a vehement Christian. From the first he lacked not only patience but humility. His life was a battle both with himself and with others. Compared with Irenaeus, he was as Luther to Melancthon. Melancthon, it has been said, followed Luther as the Homeric *Lité* follows Até; but Tertullian, following Irenaeus, was like *Até* walking in the footsteps of Lité.[1] Often perversely sophisticated, often "outrageously unjust, in manner harsh to cynicism, scornful to gruesomeness," he was yet always unselfish, always sincere, and always terribly in earnest. He might have said with Luther when asked to moderate his language, that "the Word of God is a battle, a ruin, and a sword." A lawyer by training, he was, like his father, a soldier by temperament, and his vehemence is due in no small measure to the perplexity of opposite convictions striving to harmonise a chaos of conflicting elements and incompatible authorities.

He struggled against his old faults, but they often mastered him, not indeed in the form of gross sins, but in the too uncontrolled tendencies of thought and speech. "Most unhappy am I," he exclaims in his book on Patience, "ever sick with the fever-heats of impatience." "I confess," he says, "to my Lord God that I show some rashness, nay, even impudence, in daring to write on patience, since I am wholly incapable of setting such an example, being a man of no good."[2] But he sighed,

[1] Wordsworth, *Ch. Hist.* i. 234. See Ebert, *Gesch. d. Christl. Lat. Literat.* (Leipz. 1874), p. 33.

[2] *De Patient.* 1, comp. Rom. vii. 18.

he prayed, he struggled for patience, and the sense of his own weakness inspired him with a deeper sense of the necessity for a virtue in which he was personally deficient. He speaks of patience as the foster-child of God, and dwells on her visage calm and serene, her unwrinkled brow, her downcast eyes, her silent lips, her innocent aspect, her white garb. "For she sits on the throne of that calmest and gentlest spirit, who is not gathered up in the whirlwind, nor lurid with clouds, but is of tender serenity, open and simple, whom in his third vision Elijah saw."[1]

Almost the whole of Tertullian's literary life was absorbed in controversies. It was but rarely that he took up his pen in the general interest of Christian edification; he is generally occupied with matters of strife and dispute into which he plunges with all the zeal of a born debater.

This spirit of vehement antagonism was partly the result of the rebound which had carried him from the impurities of Paganism into the most rigid self-denials of an ascetic Christianity. He saw the whole world in shocks of contrast, and writes of it in antitheses. Life assumed to him the aspect of an internecine and incessant struggle between Christ and the demon host. He describes the devil as a most indefatigable and sleepless enemy, who is specially enraged by the possibility of penitence, who watches, storms, besieges, strikes, entangles, terrifies, perverts the soul with an inexhaustible enginery of stumbling-blocks and temptations,[2] and from whom we can only escape through the wicket of penitence.[3] It is God's one antidote to devilish poisons. The wounded stag seeks for the dittany which shall expel the arrow from his wounds. The swallow, which

[1] *De Patient.* 15. [2] *De Jejun.* 13. [3] *De Poenit.* 7.

has blinded its young, restores them to sight by its healing celandine. If we neglect God's one remedy of repentance, must we not be more senseless than the mute and irrational creatures?[1]

Tertullian's baptism probably followed his conversion very speedily, and of the efficacy of baptism he felt the deepest conviction. He thought that it should be deferred till after infancy. His tract on baptism was aimed at the teaching of a woman named Quintilla, who maintained that faith alone is sufficient for salvation. He calls her "a viper of the Cainite heresy," and therefore naturally averse to baptism, since "vipers and asps and basilisks usually affect arid and waterless places. But this most monstrous Quintilla, who being a woman had no right even to teach sound doctrine, knew very well how to kill the little fishes (Christians) by taking them away from the water. For we little fishes, after the example of Christ our Fish, are born in water, nor are we safe in any other way than by remaining in the water."[2] In the tract written before his Montanist days he speaks of the types of baptism, its manner, its efficacy, and the most suitable times and preparation for it; and he answers the objections of cavillers. It is a pity that Tertullian never saw how little he gained for his cause by calling his opponents monsters and vipers. As regards his general views, he deepened the belief that martyrdom was a second and efficacious baptism for all except heretics and schismatics. The Pagans seem to have known about this "baptism of blood," for when Saturus

[1] *De Poenit.* 12.

[2] *De Bapt.* 1. The Fish was a sort of cryptographic sign among Christians, both as alluding to baptism and because, by what the Jews called *Notarikon*, ΙΧΘΥΣ stood for Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ.

the catechumen was first bit by the leopard at Carthage they shouted out "*Salvum lotum! salvum lotum.*" (Washed and saved!)

Of the outer events of his life, unhappily, we henceforth learn scarcely anything. We know that, like so many of the Fathers, he must have moved not unfrequently from place to place. We find traces of a residence in Greece, where his admiration was kindled by the fasts and stations of the Greek Christians, and where he may possibly have written some of those Greek treatises which now are lost. He once lived at Rome, for he speaks of the splendour and luxury which he there had witnessed.[1] Carthage, his original home, was probably his ordinary place of residence.

He was married. So much at least is beyond question, for he addressed two treatises to his wife, in the former of which he entreats her not to marry again if she survives him, and in the latter—unwilling to fetter her too severely — warns her at least not to marry a heathen. These tracts probably belong to the earlier stage of his career, for after he had joined the Montanists he would scarcely have even tolerated the notion of a second marriage under any circumstances whatever. We may hope that his somewhat turbulent spirit found a haven of rest within his own home, for not only does he address his wife in the language of genuine respect and affection, but in one noble passage[2] he exclaims, "How can I adequately detail the felicity of that marriage which the Church cements, and the offering ratifies, and the benediction seals, angels proclaim, the Father regards as valid? . . . How dear is the bond of two of the faithful, of one hope, of one discipline, of one and the same service.

[1] *De Cult. Fem.* ii. 7, 8. [2] *Ad Uxor.* ii. 9.

Both are brethren, both are fellow-slaves, they are one in flesh and in spirit; for both are in one flesh, and where the flesh is one the spirit is also one. Together do they pray, together do they prostrate themselves, they pass their seasons of fasting together, with mutual instruction, mutual exhortation, mutual support. Together are they in the Church of God, together in the banquet of God, together in trials, in persecutions, in seasons of refreshment; neither has secrets from the other, neither avoids the other, neither is burdensome to the other. The sick are freely visited by them, the indigent maintained. Their alms are without anguish, their sacrifice without hindrance, their daily diligence without obstruction. They do not need to cross themselves furtively, nor to wish each other joy with trembling, nor to bless each other without words. They sing together their psalms and hymns, and vie with each other which shall sing best to God. When He sees and hears such things Christ rejoices; to them He sends His peace. Where the two are, there is He; and where He is, the Evil One is not."

It is true that the man who could write thus enthusiastically of the beatitudes of holy wedlock, afterwards adopted those hyper-ascetic and anti-scriptural views which led him to disparage matrimony as a state involving an inherent taint, and as one which was not so much approved as merely allowed. It is true also that he sometimes dwells in an exaggerated way on the trials and inconveniences of matrimony, and talks of "the most bitter pleasure of children," in a way which makes us doubt whether he had ever had children of his own.[1] Even as a young man he is said to have addressed to a heathen philosopher a book on the difficulties of

[1] *Ad Uxor.* i. 5.

the married state, which is no longer extant.[1] In reading Tertullian, however, we must bear in mind that he is essentially a controversialist, and that his expressions are varied to suit the exigencies of his polemic. "Nature," he says, "is to be venerated, not blushed for. . . . It is the excess, not the condition itself, which is impure."[2] When he is arguing against Marcion, who attributed marriage to the Demiurge, and condemned it altogether, he can eloquently defend its sanctity. But there is no doubt, from the general tenor of the many tracts which bear more or less on this topic, that he had already been infected with the error which declares the superior merit and holiness of celibacy; and that too in spite of his admission that even in those early days the vows of continence taken by "brides of Christ"[3] had led to scandals of the most infamous description.[4] We may earnestly hope that he was happy in his marriage, but if so it was in spite of an ideal of womanhood which was rarely sustained at its proper level. In his tract "On the Dress of Women," he speaks as if every woman ought always to be a weeping and remorseful Eve. "Knowest thou not," he asks, "that thou art an Eve? The sentiment of God about that sex still lives in this age; and so must the guilt also live. Thou art the gate of the devil; thou art the unsealer of that tree, thou art the first deserter of the divine law, thou art she who didst persuade him whom the devil could not assail, thou didst so easily dash down man, the image of God; because of thy punishment, that is death, even the Son of God had to die. And is it in thy mind to adorn

[1] Jer. *Ep.* xxii. *c. Jovin.* i. 13. [2] *De Anim.* 27.

[3] The first occurrence of this phrase—a far from happy one—"*Quot Virgines Christo maritatae?*" (*De Res. Carn.* 61). They are also called "Christi ancillae," "Nuptae Christi," "Faeminae ad Deum pertinentes," etc. [4] *De Virg. Vel.* 11. See Kaye's *Tertullian*, pp. 391-404.

thyself save in thy robes of skin? Come now. Suppose that in the beginning the Milesians shore their sheep, and the Chinese wove their trees, and the Tyrians dyed them, and the Phrygians broidered them, and pearls gleamed and onyx stones glistened,—if gold and avarice had already sprung together from the earth, and the mirror were already allowed to tell such lies, Eve, I suppose, expelled from Paradise, dead already, would have desired these things! Well then, all those things are the mere burdens of a woman condemned and dead, provided, as it were, for the procession of her funeral."[1] Such language can hardly be called persuasive, or even consistent with ordinary amenity. "These adornments," as he proceeds to argue from the Book of Enoch, "are the inventions of devils, who revealed them to the women by whom they fell." One of his arguments against gems is that they are said to be torn out of the foreheads of dragons. "Is a Christian woman then to lack something unless she borrows her adornments from the serpent? Thus will she trample on the devil's head while she heaps ornaments from his head on her own neck and her very head!"

It is a much more difficult question to decide whether Tertullian was or was not a presbyter.

Those who say that he was not, appeal to two passages of his writings. In one he says, "We shall

[1] *De Cult. Fem.* i. 6. In the second part of this treatise (c. 7) he speaks very much in Jerome's style of women who will not let their hair alone, but twist it up, or let it loose, encourage it or pluck it out, torture it into curls or fluff it into redundance; besides affixing to it "nescio quas enormitates sutilium"—wigs, turbans, chignons—like a helmet or a scabbard; to say nothing of their paints, dyes, and cosmetics. He asks them whether they expect to rise again with ceruse, and rouge, and saffron, and with such boundless convexity of head-dresses? "Abstain," he says, "from these condemned things. God sees you to-day such as He will see you then!"

be foolish if we suppose for a moment that laymen may do what priests may not do. *Are not we laymen also priests?* It is written, 'He hath made us also a kingdom and priests to God and the Father.'"[1] In another he argues, "When we extol and inflame ourselves against the clergy, then we are all one, then we are all priests, because He hath made us priests to God and the Father. But when we are challenged to an equality of priestly discipline, we lay aside our fillets and are unequal again."[2]

Certainly, even when we make allowance for the personal and picturesque style of Tertullian, the *primâ facie* impression made by these passages—together with the absence of any proof in Tertullian's writings that he had been ordained—leads us to conclude that he was a layman. There is but one passage which can even plausibly be quoted on the other side. In his book on the soul he tells us that there was in his community a sister who had received the spiritual gifts (*charismata*) and who used to fall into the ecstatic state during the Sunday services in Church. In these trances she used to talk with angels, and even with Christ, to hear mysteries, to discern hearts, and prescribe medicines to those who desired them. The material for these visions was suggested by the psalms, lessons, and sermons of the day. "Perchance we had discoursed somewhat about the soul, whilst this sister was in the spirit. At the conclusion of the service, after the congregation had been dismissed, according to her custom of announcing to us what things she has seen — for they are most carefully sifted that they may be approved—she said, among other things, 'A soul was shown to me in bodily shape, not empty and of void consistence, but soft and

[1] *De Exhort. Cast.* 7. [2] *De Monog.* 12.

transparent.'"[1] Now this passage is equally indecisive, for neither from the first person plural, nor the fact that Tertullian with others stayed behind when the general congregation was dismissed, can we safely assume that the writer was a priest. Jerome, however, assures us that he was.[2]

It was a test of the entire sincerity of Tertullian's conversion that he did not fall away under the fierce trials of persecution. Even in A.D. 188, the priestesses of the Dea Coelestis had roused the passion of the heathen multitude against the Christians, and, aided by Jews, had rifled cemeteries and assaulted congregations.[3] The Christians had been insulted by gross caricatures, and overwhelmed with hideous calumnies. The proconsuls Pertinax, Severus, and others had endeavoured to protect them, and the attention of their enemies was distracted for a time by the civil war between Niger and Albinus. But these pretenders were suppressed in A.D. 197, and persecution at once began. It drew from Tertullian the first of his impetuous books, the tract addressed to the martyrs. The Scillitan martyrs had been slain at Carthage in 180, and in 198 the new scenes of bloodshed began by the execution of Namphano and the martyrs of Madaura. The horrible yells of *Christianos ad leones* and *Christianas ad lenones* were heard on every side. The prisons were thronged with sufferers towards whom the kindness of their fellow-Christians never ceased. But the Church was shaken to its foundation. Some recanted and then recanted their

[1] *De Anim.* 9. We may infer from this and other passages that Tertullian did not go so far as other Montanists are said to have done in approving of the public ministrations of women. His sympathies were mostly in the other direction, though he recognised the visions and prophecies of these ecstatic sisters as being divine not satanic.

[2] See Optatus, *Adv. Parmen.* i. [3] Praedestinatus (?), *De Haer.* 26.

recantation. Others apostatised altogether. It was at this period that Tertullian poured forth in succession his "Apology," "To the Gentiles," "On Games," and "On Idolatry." Then, after a brief pause, the refusal of the Christian soldier to wear a laurel crown at the distribution of the donative of Severus and Caracalla called forth fresh persecutions. In 202, Severus forbade all conversions, and the mob began to demand that Christians should have no burial places—"*Areae non sint.*" At this period perished Satyrus, Saturnius, Resecatus, Felicitas, and Perpetua; and Tertullian wrote his tracts "On Flight," and his "Scorpiace," to denounce those who fled from martyrdom or purchased immunities. After 205 there was again a respite till 211, when once more the cruelties began which called out Tertullian's address to Scapula. Thus between 192 and 212 he had been incessantly combating for the cause of Christianity, defending the innocence of his brethren, and with mordant fury denouncing and exposing their Pagan enemies. "Miserae atque miserandae nationes," such is the title with which he invites them to listen to an exposition of Christian institutes! "Miserandae nationes," he cries, "I will now grapple with you about your gods." Pagan defences fared badly in his hands. "Quam sapiens argumentatrix," he exclaimed, "sibi videtur ignorantia humana!" After 212 and until 235, under Caracalla, Elagabalus, and Alex. Severus, peace was once more restored to the afflicted Church. But during the long previous period Christians were "a race ready for death," and "daily lions were demanded to devour them."

He probably began to be prominent as a Christian apologist very shortly after his conversion. His was a character which "moves altogether if it moves at all."

He never did anything by halves. He had no sooner seen the falsity of Paganism than he began to hate it with an entire hatred. In his early tract "To the Martyrs," he humbly warns them against their own dissensions, but congratulates them on having rather gone out of a prison than into one, since their confinement prevented them from seeing alien gods, from breathing the foul odour of sacrifice, from hearing the shouts of the games, and witnessing the fury, madness, or uncleanness of those who frequented them.[1] His tract "On the Games," had perhaps been provoked by the spectacles which celebrated the final triumph of the Emperor Severus. He interdicts all Christians absolutely from taking any part in them, telling them that if they needed blood they had the blood of Christ. He says that the very decorations of the circus are a mass of idolatries, and that even the colours of the charioteers were dedicated to demons. Further, that these pleasures cause excitements which lead to lapses and give fresh force to passionate desires. He ends with a savage picture of the future exultation which Christians would feel when, instead of the circus, the two ampitheatres, and all the racecourses of the world, they should see the spectacle of hell as well as of heaven.

His *Apologeticus*, addressed to magistrates, contains the vigorous outline of the arguments which in his books "To the Gentiles" he expands for the general public. It is a tremendous defiance. He draws a scathing

[1] *Ad Mart.* 4. In this treatise he alludes to the death of Peregrinus (A.D. 165), and perhaps to the executions which followed the defeat of Albinus (A.D. 197). We see in this treatise all his epigrammatic force in such sentences as "Christianus etiam extra carcerem seculo renuntiavit, in carcere autem etiam carceri. Nihil interest ubi sitis in seculo, qui extra seculum estis." "Hoc praestat carcer Christiano, quod cremum Prophetis." Speaking of earthly and heavenly glory, he says, "Si tanti *vitrum*, quanti margaritum?"

contrast between the guilt of Paganism and the slandered innocence of Christianity. He taunts the heathen with gross injustice for justifying their hatred by their wilful ignorance, and with preferring the luxury of hating Christians even to the blessings which Christianity brought them. He flings back their own charges upon themselves and upon their deities. He says that their Jupiter, being a parricide and an incestuous adulterer, must have been (in *their* opinion) a Christian. He brands the senselessness of idol-worship with a sarcasm as scathing as that of Isaiah. He ridicules their silly assertion that Christians worshipped the head of an ass. He tells them that their very Tartarus was peopled with the wretches and criminals who most resembled their own gods. His appeal for justice is the hurling of a thunderbolt. He does not reason with the heathen; he does not try to win them by speaking the truth in love; his one aim is to beat them to the earth.

V

Continued

TERTULLIAN AND MONTANISM

SECTION II

The lapse of Tertullian to the Montanists is the chief fact of his life, and without some knowledge of their tenets we can neither understand the character of the man nor the significance of a mass of his later writings.

About the middle of the second century there arose in Phrygia a sect known as the Kataphrygians, who from their founder were called Montanists.[1] Our earliest account of Montanus is preserved by Eusebius[2] from an unknown author, supposed by some to be Asterius

[1] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* iv. 511. They, or minor sects of them, were also nicknamed *Quintilliani*, from a (seceding ?) prophetess named Quintilla (perhaps the Cainite Quintilla at whose teaching Tertullian aims his *De Baptismo*); *Priscilliani*, from Priscilla; *Pepuziani*, from the obscure and ruined village of Pepuza, on which they fixed as the future site of the New Jerusalem. We also find the nicknames *Artotyritae*, as though they ate bread and *cheese* at the Eucharist; *Passalorynchites* and *Tascodrugitae*, from two Greek and Phrygian words which implied that in prayer they put the forefinger upon the nose. Ephiphan. *Haer.* 29. The latter peculiarities, however, do not apply to Tertullian, or to all the sects, and the gesture may merely have been meant to express that prayer should be *interior* and wordless.

[2] *H. E.* v. 16. He says that the chief opponent of Montanism was Apollinaris of Hierapolis. Apollonius also attacked the early Montanists, but the entire frivolity of his accusations is a powerful testimony in their favour.

Urbanus. He ought to have possessed some information, for he wrote only thirteen years after the death of Maximilla, the chief prophetess of the early Montanists. He has, however, nothing to tell us, except that Montanus began his career at Ardaban, on the borders of Mysia and Phrygia, when Gratus was proconsul of Asia;[1] that he laid claims to inspiration, as also did two of his female followers, Maximilla and Prisca; and that they were condemned and excommunicated by various synods.[2] He adds the stories that Montanus and Maximilla hanged themselves, and that Theodotus, another member of the sect, was "tossed up in the air like a quoit by the devil, and so miserably perished as he was being lifted up towards heaven in an ecstasy." Even if the first story were true, it only shows that intense religious enthusiasm, weakened by self-maceration and maddened by unjust persecution, easily passes into frenzy and despair. The story, however, is wholly unauthenticated, and may be a mere forgery of malice. The stupid invention about Theodotus occurs also in the legendary fate of Simon Magus, and seems to be a distorted fancy founded on the fate of an unhappy acrobat in the reign of Nero. Even the retailer of this gossip practically implies that it was scandal and nothing more.

To these probably lying rumours are added some brutal calumnies, which are found in Cyril of Jerusalem. He calls Montanus "that miserable man, full of all uncleanness and lasciviousness," and says that he "cut the throats of wretched little children, and chopped them up

[1] Epiphanius, *Haer.* xlviii.-li. implies three different dates for the origin of Montanism, A.D. 135, 157, and 182. Perhaps A.D. 130 is not far wrong.

[2] These are said to be "the first synods which are mentioned after the apostolic age." Schaff, l. c.

into horrid food for the purpose of their so-called mysteries."[1] This was written two centuries after the death of Montanus. It is not a whit more true than the similar charges which were brought against the Christians by the Pagans. It becomes indeed infinitely more shocking when it is hurled by Christians against their fellow-Christians; but there is not the smallest tittle of evidence in its favour. It is the frothy and burning venom of unchristian hatred. In the case of Montanus the slanders collide with each other. While Isidore charges him with being a debauchee, Jerome taunts him with being a eunuch (*abscissus* and *semivir*).

Of Maximilla we know in reality nothing but what is good. She sacrificed all her wealth—and this is represented as a bribe to heresy! She lived on grateful free-will offerings—and this is stigmatised as mean avarice![2] If she believed herself to be a prophetess, wherein did she differ from the four daughters of the deacon Philip, or from those who (as St. Paul bears witness) "prophecied" in the Corinthian Church? "I am chased like a wolf from the fold," she said, "and yet I am not a wolf. I am word and spirit and power." Was it a crime to believe in the Holy Ghost, or to believe that He could inspire women as well as men?

Montanus, like many other reformers, was not a man of genius, yet under happier conditions he might have been the Wesley of the second century.[3] Indeed,

[1] Cyril Hieros. *Cat. Lect.* xvi. 8 (and Newman's Note, Oxf. Tr.) See too Isid. Pelus. i. 242; Jer. *ad Marcell.* xli. Eusebius implies that he is only furnishing gossip (φασι, λέγεται, φήμη ἐστι, etc.)

[2] Apollonius *ap.* Euseb. v. 18. Clement, Origen, Cyprian, and Athanasius know nothing of the charges of immorality. Even Jerome inclines to disbelieve them. To similar accusations, as Pascal says, "On n'a qu'à répondre *Mentiris impudentissime*" (*Lettres Prov.* 15).

[3] He adopted Wesley's plan of paying itinerant preachers out of voluntary contributions.

Wesley had so much sympathy with him as to declare that, as far as he could see, this "poison-darting serpent" of Eusebius was the saintliest man whom that century produced.[1] His orthodoxy on the most essential points is not disputed even by Epiphanius, who admits that his followers accepted the entire Scriptures, maintained the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, and believed in the resurrection of the dead.[2] Of the general orthodoxy of his followers there can be no doubt. It is admitted by Hippolytus[3] and maintained by Tertullian in many of his writings.[4] It has indeed been alleged that Montanus drew a distinction between the Holy Ghost and the Paraclete, and himself claimed to be the Paraclete.[5] There is no truth in either statement, nor have we any proof of Augustine's assertion that he and his prophetesses claimed a fuller or superior degree of inspiration than that given to the Apostles. What he

[1] Mosheim calls him "*Minime malus*," *De Reb. Christ. Saecl. Sec.* c. 66. Wernsdorf wrote a Vindication of Montanism (*Comment. de Montanistis*, Dantzig, 1781), and Mr. De Soyres (*Montanism and the Primitive Church*, Cambr. 1878) is highly favourable to it. Themiso wrote a Catholic epistle in defence of Montanism. Among other attacks the Montanists are accused of avarice and licentiousness.

[2] Epiph. *Haer.* 28. [3] *Philosoph.* viii. 19.

[4] "It is not," he says, "because Montanus, and Priscilla, and Maximilla preach any other God, or hold a wrong faith concerning Jesus Christ, or overturn any rule of faith or hope, that the New Prophecies are rejected, but because they teach that we should fast oftener than we marry." Even Epiphanius (*Haer.* xlix.) admits that the Montanists used both Testaments, and believed in the Resurrection. Tertullian says that he and the Carnals (*Psychici*, *i.e.* the Catholics) had one Lord, one hope, one faith, one baptism. "Semel dixerim *una ecclesia sumus*," *De Virg. Vel.* 2. Comp. *c. Prax.* 1; *De Jejun.* 1.

[5] Mosheim, *Eccl. Hist.* Cent. II. p. 237. See Kaye, p. 22, who abundantly refutes the first error. As for the second, compare the language of the Confessor Vettius Epagathus in the letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne. "He also was taken up into the lot of the martyrs, being called a Paraclete of Christians (παράκλητος χριστιανῶν χρηματίσας) and having in himself the Paraclete, the Spirit, more than Zacharias had."

did maintain was the necessary and forgotten truth that the influences of the Holy Spirit are not extinct; and that the gift of the Holy Spirit was promised to all Christians. Epiphanius quotes from Montanus such passages as, "I am the Lord, the Lord God, who take my abode in man. I am neither an angel nor a messenger, but I come as the Lord Himself, God the Father;" and "Behold the man is as a lyre, and I smite him as a plectrum. The man slumbers and I wake. Behold it is the Lord who estranges the hearts of men, and gives them hearts."[1] It would be absurdly unjust to draw from such expressions the charge sometimes made against Montanus that he himself claimed *to be* God the Father, or the Paraclete, whom he merely supposed to be speaking through him. It is beginning to be widely recognised that in many of its aspects Montanism was an honest and earnest endeavour to restore the discipline and the practices of primitive Christianity. It degenerated into excessive supernaturalism and puritanism, but it was in its earlier phases an earnest and well-meaning reaction against Gnostic rationalism and Catholic laxity.[2] And undoubtedly the discipline on which the Montanists so sternly insisted had grown woefully lax. If there be any truth at all in the picture which Hippolytus has given us of the two successive Popes Zephyrinus and Callistus, we can hardly wonder that a worthier Pope was inclined to listen to Irenaeus when he pleaded for at least a modified tolerance of Montanism. The Paraclete, whose continuous inspiration the Montanists claimed to represent, was regarded by them as "the

[1] The various oracles of Montanus, Maximilla, and Prisca, have been collected by F. Münter (*Effata et oracula Montanistarum*, Hafniae. 1829), and Bonwetsch (*Gesch. d. Montanismus*, Erlangen, 1881).

[2] Schaff, *Ante-Nic. Christianity*, ii. 417.

restorer" rather than "the founder" of a new discipline which was meant to counteract the growing worldliness of the Church.[1]

Montanus, himself an unlearned provincial neophyte, was but the mouthpiece of a prevalent conviction which took many forms. He was at the opposite pole to Gnosticism; but, in his democratic simplicity, he held with truth that the original revelations to the Apostles and Evangelists had not exhausted the whole possibility of revelation.[2] There was, however, this great difference between the schools. The Gnostics relied on a secret tradition, the Montanists on a living and continuous inspiration. The Church was becoming stereotyped into rigidly immutable customs, which extended to the minutest points of discipline and organisation, and which tended to place in the hands of the bishops—as of old into the hands of the lawyers and Pharisees—the key of all religious knowledge. But Montanus and Tertullian spoke the beliefs of multitudes when they argued that an unprogressive Church must of necessity be a dead Church; that progress is the law not only in the realm of nature but also in the kingdom of grace; that it was the continuous work of the Spirit of God to direct discipline, to unfold the meaning of Scripture, to reform the errors of the understanding;[3] that the Holy Spirit still illuminated the eyes of the heart in spiritual men; that the power to bind and loose was conferred not on Peter only, but on all who had Peter's spirit and made Peter's confession; that if it were right to say with Irenaeus, "Ubi ecclesia ibi spiritus," it was also right to add with him, "Et ubi

[1] *De Monog.* 2.
[2] Comp. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* iii. p. 548; Tert. *De Praescr. Haer.* 25.
[3] Tert. *De Virg. Vel.*

spiritus, ibi ecclesia."[1] As the bud bourgeons and becomes fruit, so the kingdom of righteousness is unfolded, they argued, by certain stages. In the infancy of the world men were left to the religion of Nature; in its childhood to the Law; in its youth to the Gospel. The manhood of the world had now come, and was under the dispensation of the Spirit.[2] Even in the Acts of the martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas we find the thoroughly Montanistic and orthodox sentiment that "faith ought not to be so weak and despondent as to suppose that God's grace was only powerful among the ancients; since God at all times carries into effect what He has promised, as a witness to unbelievers and a blessing to the faithful."[3]

These opinions (as Möhler points out) necessarily involved the truth, on which Luther so powerfully insisted, and which is the foundation-stone of Christian liberty,—the truth of the universal priesthood of all believers.[4] The Montanists believed that the prophecy of Joel was now fulfilled, "And it shall come to pass afterwards, saith the Lord, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams."[5]

In many respects, then, Montanism was a protest in

[1] Iren.

[2] Tert. *De. Virg. Vel.* 1; comp. *De Monog.* 14, where he says that the Paraclete might abrogate what Paul had permitted, just as Christ had annulled the Mosaic law. The Spirit is "Novae disciplinae Institutor," *De Monog.* 11, *De Judic.* 11.

[3] In these opinions the Montanists closely resembled Abbot Joachim of Fiora, the Fraticelli, the early Quakers, and the Irvingites.

[4] "Sed ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici," *De Exhort. Cast.* 7; comp. *De Bapt.* 6.

[5] Mossman, p. 346. See Neander (*Ch. Hist.* ii. 232-260), to whose treatment of the subject I am much indebted.

favour of primitive Christianity, a revolt against the secularisation of the Church. Setting aside its errors and extremes, and repudiating with indignation the foul calumnies heaped upon it in later centuries by Cyril of Jerusalem, Isidore of Pelusium, Augustine, and others—who repeated them at fourth or fifth hand—the orthodox section of Montanists hardly held a single distinctive opinion which does not find its parallel in the writings of Athenagoras, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus. If Montanus believed in visions, so did Clement, Ignatius, Hermas, Justin, Irenaeus, Cyprian, Jerome, Ambrose. If they believed in passivity under inspiration, if they looked for a millennium on earth, exalted fasting, and disparaged wedlock, so did many of the doctors of the Church.

Unhappily, however, the Montanists did adopt an opinion which became an element of superstition and ruin. In recognising the reality of an order of Christian prophets, they tried to extract from the Old Testament the notion that prophecy was impossible without the conditions of somnambulism and trance. "A man established in the Spirit," says Tertullian, "especially when he sees the glory of God, or when God speaks through him, must necessarily fall out of sentience, being in truth overshadowed by the divine virtue."[1] Now this notion of trance, or suspended volition (ἔκστασις), as a necessity of prophecy was a delusion borrowed from Paganism and from Plato, and thence adopted by Philo into the range of Jewish opinion. Clement of Alexandria, on the contrary, regarded "ecstasy" as a sign of apostasy.[2] Both in the Old and New Testament, "the spirits of the

[1] *C. Marc.* iv. 22. The Montanists relied on the use of the word ἔκστασις in the LXX. to express Adam's "deep sleep."

[2] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* i. p. 31.

prophets are subject to the prophets," nor did they exhibit the frenzy—the wild eye and streaming hair and foaming mouth—of the Pythoness or the Pagan seer. Miltiades wrote a book on this very topic—"That a prophet ought not to speak in trance."[1] But these phenomena of spiritual influence mastering the natural powers—the somnambulism, the catalepsies, the morbid conditions, the wild glossolalies, the powers of thought-reading and faith-healing—have recurred again and again at periods of deep religious emotion and excitement. They are the normal conditions of such a mood when it passes out of the control of the reason, and women are usually the earliest and the most conspicuous in the manifestation of such phenomena. In these days they are understood, both in their psychological and their pathological aspects. In those days they were universally mistaken for the results of divine inspiration or demoniac possession.[2]

The truer views of Montanism were liable to a threefold degeneracy into superstition, tyrannous rigorism, and spiritual pride.

I. It was allied to many elements of superstition. In its rebound from Gnostic idealism it became grossly material, even to the extent of believing in a corporeal soul and a corporeal God.[3] In its repudiation of fantastic

[1] *περὶ τοῦ μὴ δεῖν προφήτην ἐν ἐκστάσει λαλεῖν.* Tertullian wrote seven books "On Ecstasy," which are lost; perhaps to confute the book of Soter, Bishop of Rome. Montanus compared the spirit of man to the lyre, and the Spirit to the *plectrum;* but so did Athenagoras (*Coh. ad Graec.* 8) and others.

[2] After mentioning the "strange tongues," the author quoted by Eusebius (l. c.) adds that some who heard them "were distressed, as though they were listening to a demon," while others "rejoiced as though what was done were of the Holy Ghost." It must be remembered that the Montanists were then *within* the Church's fold.

[3] *C. Prax.* 7, "Quis enim negabit Deum corpus esse?" comp. *De Anim.* 7.

allegory it fell into slavish literalism.[1] It originated in Phrygia, the hotbed of wild nature worships, the natural outcome of temperaments nurtured in a land of drought, deluges, and earthquakes. According to one story, Montanus himself, before his conversion to Christianity, had been a mutilated priest of Cybele, familiar with the orgiastic practices of her frenzied worship. His view of Christianity was likely to be mingled with excited anticipations, and these were fostered by the bloody persecutions which had tried the Churches of Asia Minor. Nothing could be more natural than that "tongues," prophecies, visions, trances, and cures regarded as miraculous should occur among excited sectaries in such an age and such a country. As among the Convulsionaires, Jansenists, Methodists, Quakers, Anabaptists, Irvingites, and Revivalists, they were taken for supernatural manifestations. In this opinion the Montanists did not differ from their opponents, who attributed them to the agency of the devil.[2] It has been said of the valley of the Lycus, that

> "Every footfall there
> Suffices to uploose in the warm air,"

half-germinating seeds of heretical theosophies. Even in the days of St. Paul, Colossae had witnessed the development of a dreamy and ascetic mysticism, for which the ordinary Christian morality was not sufficiently exalted. Gnosticism fixed its thoughts on

[1] Tertullian calls the Scriptures "Dei litteras" (*De Anim.* 2), but he extends his inspiration even to the book of Enoch (*De Idol.* 4 ; *De Cult. Fem.* i. 3), the Sibylline books (*Ad Nat.*), and when it suits him, the Pastor of Hermas (*De Nat.* 12), of which he speaks elsewhere with profound contempt.

[2] According to the author quoted by Epiphanius, the bishops of Comana and Apamea wished to question the evil spirit by whom they supposed Maximilla to be possessed ; and were only prevented from doing so by Themiso, an influential Montanist. *Haer.* 48.

unspeakable origins; Montanus chiefly dwelt on existing supernatural phenomena which seemed to herald the millennial reign of Christ, the Second Advent, and the final conflagration of all things. "After me," said Maximilla, "there shall be no prophetess more, but the end of the world."[1] Such views, combined with a spiritual pride which grew more intense under persecution, made the Montanists gloomy, fierce, and credulous, and such was the temperament of Tertullian himself. There is a touch of positive savagery in his anticipation of the approaching triumph of the saints over their adversaries,[2] and he could induce himself to believe that a Roman army marching to the East had for forty days seen every morning a city suspended in the air.[3]

II. The rigorism of the system, and its repudiation of the worldliness into which many Churches had fallen,[4] led the Montanists into an attempted tyranny which would have crushed the liberty they asserted for all who could claim guidance of the Spirit of God. Had their movement succeeded in its completeness, life would have been reduced to gloomy horror, and the Church would have been degraded into a community of fanatics, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats. To this end they wrote, as Hippolytus says, "innumerable books." They exalted celibacy into a position to which it has no claim, and in this respect unfavourably influenced the current opinion of the Church. They disparaged wedlock as a miserable concession to human weakness,[5] and not only treated

[1] *Ap.* Epiphan. *Haer.* 48. [2] *De Spectac.* 30. [3] *C. Marc.* iii. 24.

[4] Tertullian goes so far as to hint that the Church of Rome was "a cave of fornicators and adulterers," because he thought that the Pope (whom he ironically calls "*Pontifex Maximus*" and "Bishop of Bishops") was willing to absolve such offenders after their repentance! *De Pudic.* 1.

[5] See *c. Marc.* i. 29.

second marriage as a "specious adultery"[1]—in which opinion they would not have stood alone—but actually forbade it. Montanism exacted the severest penances. It prescribed as obligatory the fastings on the "station-days," which hitherto had been voluntary;[2] it extended the time of the fast till three in the afternoon, and insisted on abstinence (*xerophagia*) for two weeks in every year.[3] It took the sternest view of human offences; would not allow infant baptism because of the frightful peril of post-baptismal sins; and taught that for adultery and fornication there was no absolution, at any rate on this side the grave.[4] Hence too, while it wisely disparaged the extravagant estimate which had long been placed on the intercession of martyrs,[5] it fostered a passion for martyrdom by inculcating a contempt for human life, and for the ordinary death caused by natural disease.

III. And when Montanism had adopted these erroneous tenets, it naturally tended to produce spiritual pride. It resembled Pietism in the days of its worst degeneracy. Its usual language was like that of the Pharisee, "Stand aside, for I am holier than thou." The Montanists spoke of themselves as spiritual, and

[1] Athenag. *Leg.* 33, γάμος δεύτερος εὐπρεπὴς μοιχεία. Comp. Theophil. *ad Autol.* iii. 15; Iren. *Haer.* iii. 17, sect. 2; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* iii. 12, sect. 82.

[2] On the "stations," see Hermas, iii. *Sim.* 5, "Quid est, inquit, statio? Et dixi, jejunium."

[3] "As for *xerophagies*," says Tertullian, "they charge them with being a novel title for a pretended duty, akin to the superstitious abstinences which purify Apis or Isis by restrictions laid on certain kinds of food." They are defined in *De Jejun.* 1 as being abstinence from flesh, the juicier fruits, etc., and were of no great extent (Id. 15).

[4] Some high authorities have thought that it is in protest against the "hideous severity" of Montanists and Novatians that in the catacombs Christians are represented by *goats* as well as kids. See *supra*, p. 16.

[5] *De Pudic.* 22.

of all other members of the Catholic Church as merely psychical—*i.e.* animal and carnal. Through the later writings of Tertullian the *Spiritales* are the adherents of what he calls the "New Prophecy," the *Psychici* are the despised majority of the Christian Church. Nothing but the egotistic delusion fostered in frames weakened by unnatural austerities could have made the Montanists fix on the wretched village of Pepuza as the site of the New Jerusalem, simply because it had been the first seat of a Montanistic gathering.[1] If Montanus and Tertullian had possessed something of the sounder judgment and self-control of Irenaeus, they would have exercised a more wholesome influence upon the growth of Christian thought. They would have bent their efforts to the maintenance of the truth that the Holy Spirit was promised to all who seek Him, and could not have been so credulously led astray after the *ignis fatuus* of vulgar and hysteric supernaturalism. They would have attached, as St. Paul did, the highest value to the *charismata* of knowledge and teaching, and might have successfully resisted the dominance of a usurping priestcraft and of a petrified tradition.[2] As it was, Montanism missed its mark in every respect, and more than neutralised its own elements of truth. It was, as Cardinal Newman says, a sort of anticipated mediaevalism.[3] In one sense indeed it may be said to have

[1] The revealing visions to this effect were of course the reflexion of waking thoughts.

[2] Neander, ii. 239.

[3] Newman *On Development*, p. 364. "Not in one principle or doctrine only, but in its whole system, Montanism is a remarkable anticipator or presage of developments which soon began to show themselves in the Church, though they were not perfected for centuries after." Dr. Pusey (*Pref. to transl. of Tert.* 8) says that the Montanists, though excommunicated in Asia, "did not separate themselves from the Church, and would gladly have been restored."

triumphed rather than failed, for the "Catholics" first crushed it as a sect and then gave lavish approval to many of its principles. Only, unhappily, the poorest elements of Montanism were influential, while its noblest principles, and above all its protest for the freedom of the spiritual life, were obliterated, until the sixteenth century revived them once again.

V

Continued

TERTULLIAN'S MONTANISTIC WRITINGS

SECTION III

Such was the system to which Tertullian—partly from the natural sternness of his own character, partly from the proclivities of his Punic temperament,[1] partly perhaps from hatred of Gnosticism and disgust at the laxity which he witnessed at Rome—began about A.D. 199 to lean more and more strongly. He sided with the martyrs against Optatus, Bishop of Carthage, and his followers.[2] His separation from the Catholics may have been accelerated by the bitterness of their opposition to him when he endeavoured to promote a more spiritual life and a more rigorous discipline. If Jerome's story be true, he was specially alienated by the envy and the contumelies of the clergy at Rome. His adoption of Montanist views has been compared to Fénelon's predilection for the Quietism of Madame de la Motte Guyon, and to William Law's acceptance of Jacob Boehme's theosophic illumination. But Tertullian was

[1] Schaff refers to Plutarch (πολιτικ. παραγγ. 3) for the bitterness and hardness of the Carthaginian character (ἦθος πικρόν, σκυθρωπόν, σκληρόν).

[2] See *Pass. Perpet. et Felic.* 13.

utterly alien in temper of mind both from Fénelon and William Law, and was affected by far more violent influences. He exulted in antagonism. Certainly, if the Roman clergy resembled the dark picture which Hippolytus has drawn, there could be but little sympathy between Tertullian and them. Montanism, on the other hand, reflected the lustre of many martyrdoms. Its influences are transparent under the famous legends of Saint Thekla. The suffering Churches of Lyons and Vienne had Montanistic leanings, and one at least of their martyrs was a Montanist. Similar views are clearly seen in the Acts of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas. The dream of the martyr Satyrus, and his appeal to Optatus, Bishop of Carthage, "to correct his flock," and to be reconciled to the presbyter Aspasius, seem to show that the sympathies of the Carthaginian martyrs also were with the Phrygian sectaries, whose teaching spread far and wide.

Hitherto the writings of Tertullian had contained no proofs of antagonism to the existing order. His tracts on Prayer, on Baptism, on Repentance, and To the Martyrs, had dealt with Christian topics in an orthodox though rigid tone; those on the Public Games and on Idolatry had set forth the duty of Christians with reference to the surrounding heathendom.[1]

Besides these tracts Tertullian had powerfully discharged his duties as a defender of Christianity in the *Apologeticus*. He deals in this book, under five heads, with the charges brought against the Christians. 1. He repudiates the accusations of cannibalism and infamous crimes by a simple appeal to the dignity

[1] In his *De Spectaculis* he says that "to go from God's Church to the devil's is to go from the sky to the sty" — "de caelo, quod aiunt in caenum."

of human nature, just as the confessors of Lyons and Vienne had contented themselves with calling these "crimes so dark that it is not lawful for us to speak or even think of them." The Christians were men like the Pagans, and at any rate they did not, as did the Pagans, expose their own children to perish, nor did they worship idols who were monsters of lust and blood. 2. The Christians did indeed abandon the deities of the Empire and the State, but it was for a more ancient, a truer, and a nobler worship. 3. That they were disloyal was a false charge. They were taught to pray for all who were in authority, and they recognised in the Empire an ordinance of God. .4. It was not the Christians who brought ruin and calamity upon the nation. Such catastrophes had been common in every age, and in this age they were rather caused by the guilt of heathendom, and were mitigated, when not averted, by the virtues and supplications of Christians. 5. Nor were Christians mere useless members of society. They lived in the world though they were not of it, and if they did not satisfy the mendicity of the gods, they freely ministered to the wants of men. Let even Jupiter stretch out his hand in the guise of a beggar, and he should be relieved![1]

The two books "To the Nations," which dealt with the unreasonableness of their detestation of Christians and with the futility of their idolatrous beliefs, are an expansion of the *Apologeticus*. In the former he had been content with the view of Euhemerus that the heathen gods were deified men. In the later he adopts the views of Varro, and considers the Pagan deities

[1] In this book, as Ebert shows, he borrows, and sometimes even verbally, from Minucius Felix—from whom, however, he is widely different in style and manner.

under the three divisions of physical, mythical, and popular.

He had also written his interesting tract "On the Witness of the Soul." It is a development of his remarkable and original conception that the soul is "naturally Christian;" that what is best and noblest within us bears emphatic witness to God and to His Christ; that the soul being either divine or given by God recognises and fears the true author of its being. It is the thought afterwards expressed by Augustine, "Thou hast made us for Thee, and our heart is restless, till it rest in Thee." Imprisoned in the body, perverted by bad training, weakened by lust and passions, enslaved to false gods, the soul no sooner recovers from its intoxication and its dreams than it looks not to the Capitol but to the Heavens, for it recognises the abode of the living God from whom it proceeds.

But in subsequent writings Tertullian began to deal with matters in which he ran counter to current Christian opinion. The tract "On the Dress of Women" is very stern in its tone of denunciation. Tertullian seized every opportunity to denounce ostentation in female dress. Even in his Apology he branded the costly apparel worn by women in the games, where a single thread sometimes bore the value of a million sesterces, and a tender neck had on it the revenue of whole forests and islands! In Christian women such luxury seemed intolerable. His indignation is specially set in a blaze by the medicaments with which they smeared their faces, and the fantastic structures into which they erected and twisted their hair. His strong reprobation of second and of mixed marriages is expressed in his books to his Wife. In his tract "On Patience" he had insisted on the virtue of asceticism.

These writings had shown that he sided with the rigorous minority in his views of life and discipline. Believing in the duty of Christian progress, believing too that the dispensation of the Spirit was meant to be an advance on the Law, and even in some respects on the Gospel, he was thoroughly prepared for the acceptance of Montanism, and not only began to distinguish between the "spiritual" and "carnal" members of the Christian community, but, unhappily, to use these as party names.[1] He did not abandon or alter a single article of the Catholic creed, which indeed he regarded as "immobilis et irreformalilis," the fixed crystallisation of traditional dogma; but he believed in an ethical and ascetic development, in an approaching millennial reign of saints, and in the special revelations of the New Prophecy, which led him to exaggerated opinions on the subject of martyrdom, marriage, fasting, personal self-maceration, and the unforgivable heinousness of all fleshly sins.[2]

It was probably in Carthage that his opinions assumed their sectarian form. There seem to have been two marked parties in the Church of Carthage, as in other churches. At the head of the moderates stood the Bishop Optatus; a more rigid party was headed by the presbyter Aspasius. Of this party Tertullian became the leader and spokesman, perhaps also the chief presbyter.

His first distinctly Montanistic work is one of the best—"On the Crown of the Soldier." On some recent occasion the Emperor Severus[3] and his son Caracalla had given a donative,[4] and it was the custom for

[1] Referring to 1 Cor. ii. 14, ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

[2] See De Soyres, *Montanism*, p. 3.

[3] Severus associated Caracalla with himself A.D. 198, and Geta A.D. 208.

[4] Dio. lxxvi. 1.

soldiers to receive it with their heads crowned with laurel. A Christian soldier, looking on this as a concession to idolatry, declined to put the garland on his forehead, but carried it idly in his hand. His conduct awoke the comments, and in a short time the indignation of his comrades and other spectators of the scene, who at once recognised that he was a Christian. The disturbance was reported to the tribune, who summoned the soldier and asked him, "Why this singularity of attire?"

"I do not feel justified," he said, "in acting like the rest."

"Why?" demanded the officer.

"I am a Christian," he answered.

His conduct received the warmest approval of Tertullian. "Oh, soldier, making thy boast in God!" he exclaims. Indeed such a witness was full of peril. The soldier was condemned by the tribune, and the judgment confirmed by the praefects. Thereupon he was stripped of all his military accoutrements; he was ordered to resign his sword, needless in the Christian warfare; he loosed the military shoes from feet which now began to stand on holy ground; the laurel crown dropped out of his hand. "Empurpled with the hope of martyrdom, sandalled with the preparation of the Gospel, girded with the sharper sword of God, in the panoply of the Apostle, and better crowned with the white wreath of martyrdom, he awaits in prison the donative of Christ."[1]

But the majority of Christians by no means shared Tertullian's admiration of the soldier's act. He does not know whether he ought to call them Christians, he says, for their views coincided with those of the heathen.

[1] *De Cor. Mil.* 1.

They called the soldier rude, and rash, and eager for martyrdom, who when merely asked about his dress brought trouble to all his comrades and fellow-Christians, and endangered "the long and blessed peace" which they had enjoyed. Nothing remains for them, says the fervid Puritan, but to pack up their baggage and prepare for flight from one city to another—the only Gospel precept which they care to remember. Some of their pastors—lions in peace, in battle deer—confront us with the question, "Where are we forbidden to wear garlands?" It is to this question that Tertullian gives his impassioned but sophistic answer—an answer which shows a very different spirit from that in which similar questions are treated by St. Paul.

He begins with the authority of custom, and says that he has never seen any one of the faithful wear a crown, whether catechumen or confessor or martyr. Custom and tradition have immense weight with him when they tell on his side, though he sweeps them away with contempt when they tell against him. Here is "*inveterata observatio;*" how dare Christians set it aside? Even if Scripture did not demand the refusal of a garland, "certainly custom, which undoubtedly has flowed from tradition, has so decided." There were many other customs which did not depend on Scripture. Thus before baptism the candidates, under the hand of the president, abjured the devil and his pomp and his angels; they were thrice dipped in the water, each time with a different response. After baptism they took milk and honey, and then abstained from washing for a week. Christians took the Eucharistic elements, which Christ had given to His disciples to divide among themselves at an evening meal, at gatherings before the dawn, and only from the hands of the presiding clergy. They

offered anniversary oblations for the dead, and for martyrs on their "birthdays." On Sundays they regarded it as a crime to fast, or to pray kneeling, as also on the days between Easter and Pentecost. They were pained if any of the bread or wine of the Eucharist fell to the ground. On all possible occasions, on going out or coming in, on putting on their clothes or boots, in the bath, and at the table, and when the lamps were lit at evening, and on going to bed, and *ad sedilia*, they signed their foreheads with the sign of the cross.[1] All these, he says, are Christian customs which have no authority in Scripture, but tradition authorises, custom confirms, faith observes them.[2]

He proceeds to argue that to use flowers as garlands is absurd, unnatural, and idolatrous both in origin and usage, and finally says that as all soldiership in heathen armies should be regarded by Christians as unlawful, the wearing of garlands in military service must be so. His hostility, however, extends to all crowns of every description, and he works himself up to the conclusion that since the head of the man is Christ, it should be as free as Christ, and not be submitted to a covering, much less to a garland, especially since Christ's garland was the crown of thorns. Christians should wait for their crown in the world to come, when He should make them kings to God and His Father. Let them blush as soldiers of Christ to be more lax than even a soldier of Mithras, who, at his initiation in a cave, the camp of darkness, has a crown offered him as a sort of caricature of martyrdom, and when it is placed upon his head is bidden to push it off with his hand upon his shoulder, declaring that "*his* crown is Mithras." After that he is never crowned, and has this as a sign to show who he is if ever he is tried about his faith. He is

[1] *De Cor. Mil.* 3. [2] Id. 4.

at once believed to be a soldier of Mithras if he flings down a garland and says that his crown is in his god. "Let us recognise the ingenuity of the devil, who apes some things which are sacred, that he may confound and judge us by the faithfulness of his followers."[1]

This tract—Tertullian's second Montanistic work—must have been written before A.D. 202, since it speaks of the immunity from persecution which the Christians had enjoyed since the days of Marcus Aurelius, and of the murmurs of the Catholics that by the soldier's wilfulness it was endangered. We see in it, in spite of its eloquence, the Nemesis of Montanism. It makes heaven and earth depend on a mere piece of outward righteousness. It employs the utmost enginery of legalism in condemnation of a small and harmless external act which nothing but the most exorbitant inferences could misinterpret into faithlessness to Christ. Tertullian exaggerated the importance of trivialities which became colossal to his imagination because he would only look at them through the distorting mists of his immediate passion.

In 202 Severus returned from his Parthian campaign, and passed a decree which, under threat of severe punishment, forbade conversion to either Judaism or Christianity.[2] This decree, in connection with the still unrepealed decree of Trajan, was quite sufficient to render the position of Christians precarious. It was aimed at the missionary activity which alone rendered possible the promulgation of the Gospel. The spring of the next year witnessed the martyrdom of Perpetua, Felicitas, and their companions.

[1] *De Cor. Mil.* 15.

[2] Ael. Spartianus, 17, "Judaeos fieri sub gravi poena vetuit. Idem etiam de Christianis sanxit."

The new peril led to Tertullian's publication of the tract "About Flight in Persecution." A Christian named Fabius had on some social occasion started the question —a question rendered imminent by the recent decree— "Whether Christians ought or ought not to fly when persecuted?" The Catholics who were present had argued that they ought to fly; Tertullian had spoken, probably with some vehemence, on the other side. It had not been possible at the time to treat the question fully or formally, and Fabius, as well as others, begged him to put down his thoughts in writing. He did so, with the somewhat bitter remark that his opponents were perhaps more liable to such difficulties, because they did not accept the teaching of the Paraclete who leads into all truth.[1] Little allusions like this serve to illustrate the deepening alienation between the stricter and more moderate parties; but as yet Tertullian adopts on the whole a friendly tone. He had already expressed one view on the subject in his tract "On Patience," but since that had been written his opinions had acquired a sterner tinge.[2]

He first discusses the question whether persecution comes from God or from the devil. His opponents regarded it as the work of the devil, and therefore as a thing which might be legitimately avoided. Tertullian argues that it comes from God, and is intended as a test, although God may suffer the devil to take part in the evil done. He proceeds to explain away the command of Christ (Matt. x. 23) as being of only local and temporary validity, and he deals similarly with the example set by St. Paul and other Apostles. It is never

[1] *De Fug.* 1.

[2] In *De Patient.* 13 he had said, "Si fuga urgeat, adversus incommoda fugae caro militat." He also speaks with more moderation in his *ad Uxor.* i. 3.

difficult for Tertullian to make Scripture mean anything he likes, even when it was so plain that such men as Polycarp before him and Cyprian after him were unable to mistake its obvious intention. He speaks with severity of deacons, presbyters, and bishops setting the example of flight, and he appeals to the testimony of the Spirit as decisive. The Spirit had said, "Seek not to die in your beds, nor in miscarriages, nor in effeminate fevers, but in martyrdoms, that He who suffered for you may be glorified." Flight now wears to his mind the aspect of an impious attempt to resist the will of God.[1] Faith does not admit the plea of necessity. He regards the offering of money to the heathen, in order to purchase immunity from martyrdom, as a still more heinous offence. If Christians adopted this practice, thievish little provincial governors and the coffers of the state in general would be enormously enriched, but martyrdom would be at an end.[2] Was it not monstrous to purchase for money the life which Christ had redeemed with his own blood? Such counsels might seem hard and even intolerable to some, but they were the counsels of God; and those who acknowledged the guidance of the Paraclete would neither fly in persecution nor purchase privilege.[3] And what if their gatherings became perilous? Let them take refuge in faith. "And if you cannot assemble in the day, you have the night, with the light of Christ luminous against its darkness."

The drift of Montanistic tendency is also observable in his "Exhortation to Chastity." It is written to console

[1] He goes so far as to say that to apostatise under torments is a lesser crime than to fly (*De Fug.* 10). Gibbon calls this tract a compound of the wildest fanaticism and the most incoherent declamation.

[2] Id. 12. Tertullian's intense scorn came out in the phrase "Pacisceris cum delatore vel milite, vel *furunculo aliquo praeside.*"

[3] Id. 14.

a Christian brother on the loss of his wife. There are, he says, three stages of virginity—lifelong virginity, virginity after baptism, and the virginity which contents itself with a single marriage. He here lays down, as a law for all Christians, the duty of abstaining from a second marriage. He explains away, in his usual manner, the distinct permission of St. Paul, and tries to prove that a second marriage is against the will of God, the natural and spiritual dignity of man, and the universal priesthood of the faithful. He fortifies his arguments by considerations drawn from the perils of the times, and the Christian ideal of marriage. According to one manuscript, he appeals in the tenth chapter to an oracle of "the holy Prophetess Prisca"; and he ends with sweeping away the excuses by which the license of second marriage was generally defended.

Up to this point he had not openly broken with the Catholics. Indeed, the fact that he has quite abandoned the humble and self-excusing tone of his first book showed that he had now come to be regarded as an influential teacher of the Church. The actual breach seems to have resulted from an embittered dispute about the wearing of the veil by virgins. Hitherto he has spoken unfavourably of the hierarchy, and alluded to the new prophecy; but a more deeply-rooted antagonism begins to appear in the tract "De Virginibus Velandis."

During his stay in Greece,[1] and especially at Corinth,[2] he had observed with approval that maidens as well as married women wore the veil. At Carthage the custom was different, for the veil was only the mark of the

[1] *De Virg. Vel.* 2.

[2] Id. 8. Such importance did he attach to these matters that he said that "the Lord had even revealed to them the size of the veil which should be worn."

married woman. Tertullian is scandalised by the appearance in Church of the unveiled virgins, although such has long been the custom. He had already written on the subject in Greek, and he now writes in Latin to say that Christ is *truth*, not *custom;* to appeal to the new oracles of the Paraclete; and to establish his views in his usual violent and sweeping style from Scripture, nature, and discipline, in spite of all episcopal authority and local tradition. In this book he turns upon the orthodox clergy and rends them, not hesitating to accuse them of hypocrisy and impurity. The debate has become far more acrimonious than it was when he wrote his tract "On Prayer." He shows his consciousness that he has not the support of the mass of Christians. He ends with an appeal even to married women not to exhibit so many forms of vanity in their veils and headdresses, some of which were so scanty and so thin and so coquettish. He says that the Arab women, who cover their entire face, will judge them; Christ himself had indicated to them especially how wrong it was to expose their necks. For there was a sister whose neck an angel in a dream had beaten as though by way of applause, exclaiming "Beautiful neck!" and "deservedly bare!" And did they suppose that it was enough to put on their heads a tassel, or a flock of wool, or a thread, and call that "wearing a veil"? Other women were like ostriches—which, though they have wings, are rather beasts than birds—stalking loftily along with small heads and long necks. They ought to acknowledge God with their heads as well as with their lips. Peace and grace from our Lord Jesus to all who read these words with a kindly spirit, and prefer utility to custom![1]

[1] *De Virg. Vel.* 17.

In this tract Tertullian's Montanism is illustrated by his tone of dogmatic positiveness. He is dealing with questions respecting which the majority of Christians differed from him; yet he speaks throughout of his own views as being "truth," and the distinct teaching of "the Spirit," and all who take the opposite side are swept aside as "sacrilegious," and "disobedient to the Paraclete."[1] He can never be moderate. He tries to make an eternal obligation out of an external ritual. Instead of seeing in the Church "a great divine and human fellowship in which he was one member, he wished for a religion well-compacted, severe, exclusive," which he might take under his immediate patronage, and fiercely maintain against all comers.[2] In his book against Praxeas he says, "The recognition and defence of the Paraclete has severed me from the carnalists."

In his tract "On Monogamy," in which he denounces all second marriages, he begins at once with a note of discord. In the very first line the whole Catholic party appears with the brand of "the carnal party" side by side with heretics. "The heretics," he says, "do away with marriages, the carnals multiply them. The former do not even marry once, the latter do not marry once for all. Oh, law of the Creator, how dost thou fare among alien eunuchs and charioteers?"[3] And yet the difference between him and his opponents only amounted to this—that they *discouraged* second marriages, while he forbade them. Even Hermas had shown reluctance in conceding their permissibility. Athenagoras called a second marriage "specious adultery," and Jerome goes nearly as far. But the more moderate fathers would have said with Ambrose, "We do not prohibit second

[1] *De Virg. Vel.* 3. [2] Maurice, l. c. 288.
[3] *De Monogam.* 1. The reading "*aurigas*" is doubtful.

marriages, but we do not advise them." This was the view which excites Tertullian's wrath. He proceeds to charge the "carnal" with treating "monogamy" (in his sense of the word) as heresy, "nor is there any reason by which they are more impelled to deny the Paraclete than while they consider him as the founder of a new discipline."[1] On the contrary, "the Paraclete introduces nothing new; he defines what he has previously ordained; he demands what he has supported."[2] Then—leaving the question of what he supposed the Paraclete to be teaching by means of Montanistic prophecies—he enters into "a very wood of sophisms, in which one can hardly see the wood for the trees." And not unnaturally, since he is undertaking the hopeless task of proving, in the face of transparent evidence to the contrary,[3] that second marriages are forbidden alike by the Old and the New Testament. Speaking of Lamech, he is guilty of the monstrous remark that it matters comparatively little whether a man has two wives at a time or one after the other.[4] In the face of two such texts as 1 Cor. vii. 39 and 1 Tim. v. 14, it is not worth while to notice Tertullian's sophistries, especially as they have been rejected by the common sense of the Christian world. He derived his views, not from Scripture, but from Montanus, and then he used the skill of a special pleader to reason them into Scripture in spite of the direct evidence which overthrows them. There were, alas! too many in his day, as there have ever been, who wished to treat the Scriptures like "a heap of missiles," in the shape of "texts," which, by torturing and chipping them into a convenient shape, and knocking off their

[1] *De Monogam.* 2. [2] Id. 3. [3] Rom. vii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. vii. 39.

[4] *De Monog.* 4, "Neque enim refert, duas quis uxores singulas habuerit, an pariter singulae duas fecerint!"

awkward angles, might be useful for hurling at the heads of their brethren.[1] In the 14th chapter he refers to the "New Prophecy," which he regarded as final, and which led him deeper and deeper into uncharitable fanaticism. The last chapter is characteristic.[2] He repudiates all appeal to "the weakness of the flesh," and calls not on "our father the monogamist Isaac," nor on "John, the eunuch of Christ," nor on Judith, nor on the saints, to condemn those who marry a second time, but on Dido, Queen of Carthage, and on Lucretia, and on the fact that only the once-married woman (*univira*) was allowed even by Pagans to place a garland on the brow of "*Fortuna muliebris*" or "*Mater Matuta.*" He refers to the wife of the flamen, the priests of Ceres, the virgins of Vesta, the priestesses of the Achaian Juno, the Scythian Diana, the Pythian Apollo. Even the priests of that Egyptian ox will, in the matter of continence, condemn the infirmity of Christians. "Blush, oh flesh, which hast put on Christ! Let it suffice thee to marry once for all. . . . . Return even to the first Adam, if thou canst not to the last. Once for all, he tasted of the tree, once he lusted, once he covered his nakedness, once he blushed before God, once he hid his blushes, once he went forth an exile from the paradise of holiness, once thereafter he married. If thou hast been in him, thou hast thy norm; if thou hast passed over 'into Christ,' it will be thy duty to be better. Show a third Adam, and him a bigamist, and then thou wilt be able to be that which, between the two Adams, thou canst not be."[3]

[1] "Every page of Tertullian almost furnishes terrible instances of that irreverent torturing of Scripture to his own purposes—of a resolute determination that it shall never contradict or weaken any purpose of his—all the while that he professes to take it as his guide and his judge."—Maurice, l. c. 334.

[2] Id. 17.

[3] It should be remembered that the strictest views on these subjects

Tertullian's next book—so far as we can conjecture the order of his writings—bears its hostility to the Catholics even in its title. It is called "On Fasts, against the Carnal," and it begins with a trumpet-note of defiance. "I should wonder," he says, "at the carnal, if they were only in the bond of incontinence which leads them to marry many times; if they were not also bursting with gluttony, which makes them hate fasts. In truth lust without greediness might be regarded as a prodigy, since these two are so united and welded together that, if they had at all been able to be dissevered,"—the rest of the sentence is too coarse to translate. And of whom is he speaking? He so utterly forgets himself as to paint in these dark colours the fellow-Christians in whose love-feasts he had so often joined, and whom, in writing against the heathen, he had with contemptuous indignation defended against these very charges! Now he scarcely deigns to treat them with common civility. "*Piget jam*," he says, "*cum talibus congredi.*" But Tertullian puts no check on the fury of his party passions. It is the shame and tragedy of his life. The evil spirit which indulged itself in these diatribes made him at last the lonely heresiarch of a dwindling schism.

In this first chapter, too, he boldly quotes the prophetic authority of Montanus, Priscilla, and Maximilla. The fasts of the Montanists were numerous, long, and severe, and they wished to make them obligatory. The object of the tract is to extol the virtue of fasting in general; to insist on "stations"[1] and "xero-

were a natural reaction from the shameless levity of Pagan unions. Jerome "saw at Rome a triumphant husband bury his twenty-first wife, who had herself interred twenty-two of his less sturdy predecessors" (*ad Ageruch. Ep.* 123, sect. 10, ed. Migne).

[1] Wednesday and Friday (*De Jejun.* 14) were *Semi-jejunia*. *De Orat.*

phagies"[1] as binding upon all; and to explain away the example of Christ[2] and the reprobation expressed by St. Paul on the attempt to impose upon Christians the yoke of heathen and Judaic observances.[3] Once more it is needless to refute such arguments as that fasting must be a means to recover God's favour because Adam fell by eating the forbidden fruit; or that additional liberty in food was conceded to mankind after the flood in order that by abstinence men might please God! More reasonable were the pleas that fasting enabled Christians to despise hardship, and that it has an intellectual and moral value. Nothing can exceed the brutal bitterness of his conclusion. Since the Catholics appealed to antiquity and custom, and charged the Montanists with innovations, he says, "Thou art ancient, if we will speak the plain truth, thou who only indulgest thy gluttony, and justly dost thou boast thine own priority; I always recognised that thou savourest of Esau the hunter of wild beasts; so dost thou devote thyself to hunting everywhere for thrushes; so dost thou come from the field of thy most lax discipline; so dost thou fail in the Spirit; if I but offer thee a little bean reddened with boiled must, instantly wilt thou sell all thy birthrights. With thee love glows in saucepans, faith grows warm in kitchens, hope lies in dishes. But love is of chief importance, because by her means thy youths sleep with their 'sisters.' Lasciviousness and lust, as we all know, are the sequels of gluttony." After sneering at a current

14. *De Anim.* 48. See Bingham, Book XXI. c. 3. The Montanists extended them to the evening.

[1] Days of abstinence from flesh and wine — *Dies aridi; Jours maigres, De Jejun.* 2, 10, 13, 16. The Catholics confined the one obligatory fast to the days between Good Friday and Easter. In Jerome's day the Montanist kept *three* Lents. Jer. *ad Marcell. Ep.* 54.

[2] Matt. xi. 19.

[3] Rom. xiv. 17, Gal. iv. 8-1, 1 Tim. iv. 3, etc.

interpretation of the "double portion" of the clergy (1 Tim. v. 17), he adds, "Who is holier among you, except the more frequent in banquets, the more sumptuous in catering, the more learned in wassails? Rightly, being men of soul and flesh only, do ye reject spiritual things; if prophets pleased such as you, they would be no prophets of mine. Why then do ye not continuously preach 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die'? Just as *we* do not hesitate expressly to command 'Let us fast, brothers and sisters, lest perchance to-morrow we die.' Let us openly vindicate our own discipline. We are certain that those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Emaciation does not displease us;—more easily perchance will slenderer flesh pass through the narrow gate of safety. Let Olympic boxers and wrestlers gorge . . . yet they too strengthen themselves by abstinence. But we have other thews, and other strength, and other contests; for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood. . . . The more full-fed Christian, however, will be more necessary perchance to bears and lions than to God, except that even to face the wild beasts it will be his duty to practice emaciation."[1]

Already in the spiritual pride and will-worship of this tract we can trace the growth of error by which fasting, from being regarded as a salutary occasional discipline, came to be regarded as something which was in itself meritorious.[2] The sanctity of men was idly measured by the length and rigidness of their abstinence, and it came to be fancied that remission of sin and restoration to God's favour could be purchased by the

[1] *De Jejuniis adv. Psychic.* 17.

[2] See some excellent remarks of Bishop Kaye, *Tert.* 422-425. The priests of Isis and Cybele observed fasts, which Tertullian regarded as imitations of divine things by the devil. *De Jejun.* 16.

torture and maceration of the body, instead of by faith and hope and love.

In the tract "On Chastity," he once more handles a favourite topic in the manner with which he has made us familiar. The tract is chiefly remarkable for the almost Donatist sternness with which he lays down as a truth taught by the Paraclete that there is no remission, no absolution on earth, for the sins of adultery, fornication, or even for second marriage.[1] It was called forth by indignation against the edict of some bishop—some think of Carthage, but more probably of Rome—by which adulterers and fornicators upon repentance had been re-admitted into Church communion.[2] It shows the harshness into which Tertullian had been misled by the arrogant Pharisaism which he began to identify with true religion. In the tract "On Penitence" he had said that *all* crimes might be pardoned upon repentance, though once alone.[3] This was the doctrine taught in the Shepherd of Hermas, but now he had thrown it away with contempt, and spoke of Hermas as "the apocryphal shepherd of adulterers." The tract "De Pudicitia" is chiefly important as the earliest definite statement of the false distinction between mortal and venial sins, as though the latter only could be forgiven by the Church.[4] Among venial sins he classes irascibility, blows, evil speaking, rash oaths, breakings of pact, lies regarded as necessary or modest—the ordinary offences

[1] *De Pudicit.* 1.

[2] The Pope was probably Zephyrinus. Cyprian energetically repudiates the Pope's right to call himself "episcopus episcoporum." *Conc. Carth.* Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 222.

[3] *De Poenit.* 8.

[4] *De Pudic.* 19. Such offenders might, however, be commended with prayers and tears to "uncovenanted mercies." He did not deny that the Church had the *power* to forgive these sins, but quoted the Paraclete of the New Prophets to maintain that she *ought* not to do so. Id. 1, 2.

of business, gain, food, and daily life—sins of such a kind that, if they were not venial, none could be saved. But he regards murder, idolatry, fraud, apostasy, blasphemy, adultery, fornication, and all sins of the flesh as so mortal, that even Christ could not intercede any longer for those who had committed them.[1] This view the Church in general has deliberately rejected.[2]

Before we leave the writings in which Tertullian deals in this spirit with questions pertaining to Christian life and discipline, we may notice the brief tract "De Pallio." It is certain that Tertullian had by this time definitely withdrawn himself from Catholic communion. He now emphasised his unusual opinions by the assumption of an unusual dress. He discarded the ordinary Roman toga, and adopted the cloak or *pallium* which was worn by Greeks and philosophers. This must have been in A.D. 208, when Severus raised his second son Geta to the dignity of an Augustus, to which he had raised Caracalla ten years earlier. For in the second chapter he speaks of the "triple virtue of the present Empire," and of "so many Augusti," causing the earth to resemble a field from which all poisonous herbs had been plucked up, "fairer than the orchard of Alcinous and the rose garden of Midas." The tract is a personal *apologia*, crammed with fantastic archaeology, rasping eloquence, and unconcealed disdain. He begins with sarcastically congratulating the Carthaginians, the chieftains of Africa—so ancient, so prosperous, and so richly blessed—on their finding leisure to observe peculi-

[1] "Horum ultra exorator non erit Christus." Yet he admits that repentance for these sins "*non frustra agetur.*"

[2] See article xvi. *Conc. Trident.* Sess. xiv. *De Poenitentia*, 2. We shall see hereafter the strong words on this offer of universal mercy which were made a subject of accusation against St. Chrysostom, and the too-famous (but much misrepresented) "*Si millies fornicemur*" of Luther.

arities of dress, and amusement in doing so. If Tertullian —who was not a philosopher—chose out of eccentricity, or arrogance, or even to save himself trouble,[1] to adopt a peculiar dress which had been hitherto regarded as the mark of a philosopher, it was his own affair, and one about which an ordinary man would not have thought it worth while to write a book. He probably decided to wear the cloak as an open sign of his renunciation of the world, and his isolation from the ordinary mass even of Christians. The simple, dark-coloured garb was a protest against every form of compromise or acquiescence, against everything which was common or unclean. In his Æschylean way he introduces the pallium itself as an interlocutor, and makes it plead in its own behalf. "I owe no duty," it says, "to the forum, or hustings, or the senate house; I keep no obsequious vigils, I pre-occupy no platforms, I haunt no official residences, I sniff no sewers, worship no lattices, wear out no benches, break no laws, bark out no forensic pleas; no judge, no soldier, no king, I have withdrawn from the populace. My only business is with myself, except that I care for nothing save not to care."[2]

That the cloak was a priestly dress, and that this was the reason why Tertullian adopted it, is a fancy now justly abandoned. He undertakes to prove that it was not superstitious, not an innovation; and that the Carthaginians themselves had worn it before they came in contact with Rome. Then he invokes heaven and earth, and the whole circle of nations, and mythology, and primeval history, and the changes of empires, and recondite literature, to furnish him with proofs that

[1] He amusingly describes the convenience of wearing a dress which was merely a square piece of cloth, and rendered the trouble of a tailor, and the torment of ordinary dress, superfluous.

[2] *De Pallio*, 5.

since change is not unnatural it is not irreligious.[1] He finally congratulates the cloak on covering the limbs of the best kind of philosopher, namely a Christian. Anything more *outré* than these six chapters can hardly be conceived. They resemble Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* without its humour. They were worthy to be commented on by the ponderous and unpractical learning of Salmasius, who, as Lord Monboddo said, devoted many pages to elucidate the silks, half silks, and linen fabrics of the ancients, while he knew nothing of the commonest processes of Lyons and Dijon. If the tone of Tertullian had not been so serious, we might have supposed that he was only amusing himself with a *jeu d'esprit* by way of rhetorical and antiquarian display.[2] And perhaps the real significance of this tract lies in the illustration which it affords of the writer's character, and in the fact that though the cloak was not an ecclesiastical dress, the motives which led Tertullian to wear it were those which more than a century later led to the adoption by the clergy of an official clerical costume.

With these tracts the distinctly Montanistic writings of Tertullian came to an end. The rest of his works were controversial and dogmatic, but were written to oppose heresies to which the whole Church was equally antagonistic. Montanism only differed from the Church in matters of observance and discipline, not in the essential doctrines of the creed. It rapidly died out, but, like the Gnostics and many other sects, it did not die out till it had bequeathed an undesirable legacy. The Church of the following centuries not only adopted

[1] In *De Pall.* 2, there is an allusion to the sea-shells found on the tops of mountains, "eager to prove to Plato that even the heights have rolled with waves" (*etiam ardua fluitasse*).

[2] It abounds in curious words. For instance, he calls Hercules "*Scytalosagittipelliger.*"

the fasts on which the Montanists had insisted, but also the legalistic view of them as obligatory and meritorious. She outdid Montanism in her hyper-exaltation of the fancied merit of celibacy, and, although she never actually forbade second marriage, she set up the false ideal of a virginity which was supposed to be more holy than wedlock. She borrowed the distinction which Tertullian had made between venial and mortal sins. She set as high as the Montanists the conception of the sanctity of the Church, but made that saintliness depend, not on the innocence of her members, but on the magic of her sacraments. It might almost be said that Montanism perished of its own success. It ceased to be schismatic because its main views were accepted as orthodox. Augustine indeed tells us that there was a sect in his own days which still styled itself "Tertullianist," and that they were brought back to the Church, perhaps by his own exertions.[1] But it is difficult to imagine what their specific doctrines could have been.[2]

[1] Aug. *Haer.* 86. Something of the same kind seems to be implied by Praedestinatus, *Haer.* 26.

[2] The pseudo-Tertullian, in the spurious appendix to the *De Praescriptionibus*, says that the sect split into two divisions under Proculus and Æschines. The followers of the latter seem to have adopted Sabellian errors.

V

Continued

TERTULLIAN AS AN ORTHODOX CONTROVERSIALIST

SECTION IV

It was a happy thing for Tertullian that his later works rendered a real service to the Church, though still written in the arrogant tone of infallibility. All his own opinions are the indubitable truth of God. All which he opposes are the plain lies of the devil. But his scorn and indignation are aimed at the direct impugners of apostolic doctrine and not at his own brother Christians. In his later writings too the tone becomes less furious. Perhaps the advance of age, perhaps the corrective influence of meditation, had helped to subdue his turbulent impatience.

A brief notice of these works will suffice.[1] In the book *On the Praescriptions—i.e.* the praescriptive rules of the Church against heretics—he tries to settle every question *à priori*, and to cut away the ground under their feet once for all. *Praescriptio*, "a formal objection," is the equivalent of the English term "a demurrer."

[1] A great part of the treatise "Against the Jews" is found in the third book "Against Marcion." It is a compilation, and both from the style and the fact that he speaks of Christianity as then flourishing in Dacia and Britain, its authenticity has been doubted.

It means "an exception made before the merits of a case are discussed, showing *in limine* that the plaintiff ought not to be heard." The principal "praescription" which renders needless the further hearing of the case is the fact that the heretics are not in accord with the holy Catholic Church. Tertullian is here only giving legal precision to the argument of Irenaeus, but he carries it further, and denies to the heretics any right of appeal to Scripture.[1] The syllogism, which is regarded as conclusive, is, "The Church is in possession of the truth. You heretics do not agree with the Church. Therefore you must be wrong, and all further argument is superfluous."[2] Thus does Tertullian knock down with a knotted club all who differed from the current theological opinions. The argument is faulty in its premisses. If, according to the Article of our own Church, "the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred," and also "the Church of Rome has erred"—if too there be scarcely a single truth outside the Apostles' Creed which will stand St. Vincent's test of Catholicity—if history proves beyond all doubt that it is possible for separate Churches, each of which claims to be Catholic, to show by persistent errors of doctrine and interpretation that they do *not* possess the gift of infallible truth, then it is clear that heresies must be met by reasoned refutation, and cannot be shut out by bare authority.[3] "Non est de consuetudine praescribendum," says Cyprian, "sed ratione vincendum." Tertullian's own bitter experience might have taught him this. He

[1] *De Praesc.* 19.

[2] Id. 21. "Sine dubio tenentem quod Ecclesiae ab Apostolis, Apostoli a Christo, Christus a Deo accepit."

[3] The Church of Rome combined to her own advantage both Tertullian's claim for tradition and his claim for progress; the latter belonging to its pretension to infallibility.

hated with a perfect hatred every heresy except his own. He differed from the vast majority of the Catholics of his day on questions of vital importance. On his own showing, therefore, he was in these respects a heretic, and the Church, as represented alike by its authorities and by the multitude of its members, might have contented itself with crushing him unheard. But when he differs from the Church, he asserts that the Paraclete is everything and custom nothing: when he agrees with the Church custom is everything, and truth being already settled, need not be investigated. He could plead eloquently with the heathen for liberty of conscience; but—except for himself and his fellow-sectaries—he can make no room for it in his dogmatic system. When he is writing against heretics and the heathen, the Church is spotless and infallible; when he is writing against the Catholics, they themselves are branded as base in practice and unsound in faith. This treatise is more than usually full of special pleading. It abounds in irritating sophisms, and in many instances explains Scripture by explaining it away. It abounds too in the clever phrases which so often serve partisans in place of serious argument and honest thought. He says that the heretics treat the Scriptures like the poetasters who make poems out of centos of lines and scraps from Homer and Virgil. But this patchwork fashion of manipulating Holy Writ has by no means been monopolised by them.

He does not however confine himself to this "praescription." Besides showing the heretics that they do not coincide with the rule of faith, and that their discipline is reprehensible, he tries to prove that they are not even entitled to inquire into the truth. Truth to him is not an ever-streaming fount, an ever-broadening

illumination; it is a compact deposit handed down by tradition.[1] In spite of the ability which characterises this treatise, it shows the arbitrary self-contradictory vehemence of Tertullian's methods. "Miserable Aristotle," he exclaims, "who taught the heretics logic, the shameless art of building up and pulling down, harsh in its conjectures, in its arguments productive of squabbling, embarrassing even to itself, treating of everything a second time, lest it should ever have settled anything once for all. Hence come those fables and boundless genealogies and infructuous questions and dissensions which creep as doth a cancer, in reining us back from which the Apostle warns us in so many words that we should be on our guard against philosophy."[2] "Away," he says, "with all attempts to produce a motley Christianity compounded of Stoicism, Platonism, and dialectics." Yet no one ever abused dialectics more flagrantly than Tertullian. His whole argument requires correction by the principle laid down by himself that "Christ is truth and not custom;" and by Cyprian, "Custom without truth is but the inveteracy of error."

This treatise is the most characteristic of his writings and the one that has produced the deepest effect; yet it is one which in many respects shows him at his worst. He silences those who pleaded the precept, "Seek and ye shall find," with one of those "dashing peremptory interpretations" of our Lord's words which he always

[1] *De Praesc.* 8, comp. 4. "Nemo quaerit, nisi qui aut non habuit, aut perdidit;" and 14, "Adversus regulam [fidei] nihil scire, omnia scire est;" and 19, "Ubi apparuerit esse veritatem disciplinae et fidei Christianae, illic erit veritas Scripturarum." This resembles the worst forms of post-Reformation symbololatry.

[2] Id. 7. Similarly Luther talks of the "damned heathen Aristotle" as the father of scholasticism.

has ready at hand. The precept was only meant, he says, for the disciples at the first beginning of their career! "I find it hard," says Mr. Maurice, "to stifle my indignation at such trifling with the divine command. And yet this treatise, which could not be sustained, as this clever author knew, without that outrage, has been a text-book among those who reverence the words of their Divine Master!"[1]

The longest and most elaborate of Tertullian's writings was the treatise against Marcion. It is the only book for which he has furnished us with the definite date at which it was written, namely the fifteenth year of Severus (A.D. 207-208).[2] With no book had he taken more pains. He wrote it three times over. The first sketch he suppressed, because he thought it inadequate. The second was stolen from him and published against his will in a very incorrect form.[3] The third expressed his most mature conceptions, and is also a characteristic specimen of his style. Can anything strike a falser keynote than his opening chapters, in which, because Marcion was a native of Pontus, he begins by inveighing violently against the Pontus Euxinus and the whole district?[4] After a hideous picture of the physical and moral enormities of the climate—in which the sun never shines, the sole atmosphere is a mist, the whole year a winter, and there is no breeze but the chilly north wind; and of the inhabitants, who devour their dead parents, and who amid the universal torpor and frost have nothing warm among them but their savagery, —he continues :—

[1] *Lectures on Eccl. Hist.* p. 279.

[2] This date only applies to the first book; the others were later.

[3] *C. Marc.* i. 1.

[4] Jerome follows the bad example in what he says about Gaul and Vigilantius.

"But nothing at Pontus is so barbarous and gloomy as the fact that Marcion has been born there, a man more grim than a Scythian, more restless than a waggon-rover,[1] more ruthless that a Massaget, more impudent than an Amazon, darker than a cloud, chiller than winter, more brittle than ice, more treacherous than the Danube, craggier than Caucasus. Nay, more, by him the true Prometheus—Almighty God—is mangled with blasphemies. Nay, Marcion is even more intolerable than the wild beasts of that barbarous land. For what beaver ever practised worse castration that he who has abolished wedlock? What Pontic mouse is a worse nibbler than he who has gnawed at the Gospels? Yea, oh Euxine, thou hast produced a monster more credible to philosophers than to Christians. For that whelpling Diogenes sought to find a man, carrying round his lamp at mid-day; but Marcion, having quenched the light of faith, has lost the God whom he had found."

Could anything be more contemptible than this style of theological controversy? It is all the worse because between Marcion and Tertullian there were many points of contact. Both of them detested Judaism; both were opposed in most respects to Gnostic speculations; both interpreted Scripture literally; both were in antagonism to the regnant hierarchy; both were rigid ascetics; both desired and professed to restore a more primitive Christianity; both were independent thinkers; both represented a wide-spread reaction against Catholic tradition, Marcion on the dogmatic and Tertullian on the disciplinary side. Both of them disliked formalism; both, if Jerome's story be true, had been subjected to the angry opposition of the Roman clergy; both were sincere and learned men; and both, though in very

[1] The Sarmatians who lived in waggons were called *Hamaxobioi*.

different degrees, were heretics and schismatics. But these constant outbursts of Tertullian against those who differed from him are not due to real passion; they are nothing but "the vulgar vituperation of the professional advocate."

Most of the treatise, however, is superior to this. In the first book he grapples with Marcion's heresy of two gods, the God of perfect mercy revealed by Christ, and the Demiurge who created the world and was the author of evil—a view which he overthrows by decisive arguments. He shows that the God of Marcion, who is holy and merciful without justice, is a contradiction. "Hear," he says, "oh sinner, a better God has been invented by Marcion."[1] In the second he shows that the Supreme God was also the Creator of the world, and does his best to account for the origin of sin and evil. The third book carries the controversy into the domain of Scripture, and the fourth book tries to refute the objections which led Marcion to write his *Antitheses* for the purpose of demonstrating an irreconcilable contrast between the Old and New Testaments. In dealing with this matter both Marcion and Tertullian fail from the inevitable deficiency of their knowledge. Many centuries were to elapse before theologians had learnt the true method of co-ordinating the two dispensations. Marcion's worst errors flowed from inability to understand how the partial and fragmentary revelation vouchsafed to the times past could be harmonised with the fuller light of the Gospel. "The severance of the Law from the Gospel is," as Tertullian truly says, "the peculiar and principal work of Marcion." Throughout

[1] Bishop Kaye points out Tertullian's fallacy of using the word *bonitas* to mean "goodness" in general, while Marcion seems to have intended it in the sense of "benevolence." *Tert.* p. 491.

this book, therefore, Tertullian is trying to convince the Marcionites that St. Luke's Gospel—from which Marcion mainly compiled his own, because he regarded it as the representative of that Pauline Gospel which he alone regarded as genuine—is not at variance with the Old Testament. The fifth book pursues the same argument through the chief Epistles of St. Paul.

Marcion is said to have been the son of a bishop of Sinope. In his early enthusiasm for the faith he had given all his goods to the Church, and had adopted the life of an ascetic. The usual charge of immorality is brought against him by Epiphanius, but the favourable view of his personal character, which we derive even from his enemies, and their testimony to the rigid ascetism, which was indeed a necessary part of his system, lead us to reject the slander with contempt.[1] Tertullian says that "once and again" he was excommunicated by his own father for headstrong independence and heretical teaching. He was a man of ardent temperament and lofty moral sense, but narrow, prosaic, one-sided, and always ready to push his opinions into extremes. He was in Rome about the middle of the second century, during the prelacy of Anicetus, and it was there that Polycarp savagely apostrophised him as "the first-born of Satan." He is said to have been refused communion, and the money he had given to the Church was given back to him.[2] He asked the clergy of Rome how they understood the warning against putting new wine into old bottles; but we can hardly

[1] This statement of Epiphanius (xlii. 1)—perhaps founded on the stupid misinterpretation of an allegorical expression—is repeated in the spurious addition to Tertullian, *De Praescr. Haer.* c. 51. Tertullian calls him "the Pontic seafarer" and Rhodon ὁ *ναύτης*, Euseb. *H. E.* v. 13.

[2] *C. Marc.* iv. 4. *De Praescr.* 30, "Cum ducentis sestertiis quae ecclesiae intulerat."

believe with Epiphanius that he threatened to tear the Church as though it were a piece of new garment, and leave the old garment rent asunder for ever. His pronounced dualism was probably developed under the influence of the Syrian Gnostic Cerdo. Of his biography nothing further is known, but he is said to have travelled far and wide as a teacher, and to have died at Rome in the days of Pope Eleutherus. His life was, doubtless, rendered miserable by the manner in which he was denounced rather than refuted. His sect produced many martyrs, and he wrote to his disciples as "his fellow-hated and fellow-miserable."[1] Tertullian says that, having confessed his errors, he was promised re-admission into the Church if he would bring back those whom he had misled, but was prevented from this effort by his death.[2] If the story be true, it illustrates the fact that, in spite of all his headstrong confusions and extravagant independence, he became convinced that whatever difficulties surround the creed of the Christian, they are far more easily solved by faith than by rash and baseless innovations. The predominantly practical view which he took of Christianity would lead him to cling less obstinately to theoretical peculiarities.[3]

Crude and wilful as was the system of his heresy, it was his misfortune to live in an age which was not furnished with sufficient knowledge to remove his genuine difficulties. There was as yet no scientific exegesis. An age which had borrowed from Plato and Philo the doctrine of verbal inspiration, and consequently placed the two Testaments on a level of equality, could

[1] *συμμισούμενοι καὶ συνταλάιπωροι*, "Commiserones et coidibiles," Tert. *c. Marc.* iv. 36; comp. id. 6.

[2] *De. Praescr.* 30. The same story, however, is told of Cerdo by Irenaeus.

[3] Gieseler, who quotes Apelles *ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* v. 13.

not but be confronted with problems which presented themselves with terrific force to so critical a mind as that of Marcion. Origen tells us that even in his day, owing to crude notions of the Old Testament, there were many gross literalists who had been led into ignoble thoughts of God, and conceived of Him in a way which would be calumnious even to the most unjust and savage man.[1] Many, indeed, like Origen himself, got rid of these difficulties by an allegorical style of interpretation, which made the Bible mean anything or nothing at their will and pleasure; but this style of exegesis did not commend itself to the healthy common sense and practical straightforwardness which were redeeming points amid Marcion's errors. Nor indeed was Tertullian in favour of this novel and arbitrary method, which had been originally borrowed from the heathen, and had been in special favour with the heretics. He saw the dangerous extremes to which it might be pushed.[2]

Marcion's own method of cutting the Gordian knot of Scriptural difficulties was violent in the extreme. His *Antitheses* seem to have resembled in general form the *Sic et Non* of Abelard, for they were made up out of passages of the Old and New Testament, like "An eye for an eye" on one side, and "Thou shalt love thine enemies" on the other, which led him to the conclusion that the good God revealed by Christ was not the Jehovah of the Jews, whom he regarded as an imperfect Demiurge. "Moses," he said, "uplifts his hands to pray for carnage, Jesus extends His upon the cross for

[1] *De Princ.* iv. 8.

[2] See especially *De Resur.* 20, 21, "Non omnia imagines, sed et veritates," etc.; *Scorp.* 11; *De Carn. Christi.* 13, "Ommia periclitabuntur aliter accipi quam sunt, et amittere quod sunt, dum aliter accipiuntur, si aliter quam sunt cognominantur."

the salvation of mankind."[1] Hence he reversed the order of Matt. v. 17, and made Christ say, "I am *not* come to *fulfil* the Law, but to *destroy*." He also held the eternity and the essential corruptness of matter, which he looked upon as the domain of the evil deity of heathendom. He swept away the whole system of Gnostic aeons and emanations,[2] and was content with a violent discontinuity. "Suddenly Christ, suddenly John," says Tertullian. "Everything with Marcion happens in this manner, whereas with the Creator they occur in their own order and fulness."[3] He was so unhappily enslaved by his own difficulties, and so little helped by others to solve them, that he abandoned all nature, all history, all the world, and even all the Old Testament to the Demiurge and the devil. Paganism was the work of the latter and Judaism of the former. He had come to the conclusion that nothing had any element of the Divine in it except Christianity, and that this was suddenly flashed upon the world to the overthrow of Judaism and its imperfect god. And as he thus tried to reform by overthrow, he also criticised by excision. Both processes were conducted on purely subjective grounds. He had his own canon to suit his own system. He received but one Gospel—a mutilated edition of St. Luke—which seems to have begun with extraordinary abruptness at the words "In the fifteenth year of Tiberius God went to Capernaum." He only accepted ten of St. Paul's Epistles.[4] His oriental horror of matter, and therefore of the body, drove him into the repudiation of all mar-

[1] See Hahn, *Antitheses Marcionis*, Regiomonti, 1823.

[2] *C. Marc.* i. 5. Hippolytus traces back the views of Marcion to Empedocles.

[3] Id. iv. 11.

[4] He anticipated the school of Tübingen in the predominance which he gave to the teaching of St. Paul. Bunsen, who, like Neander, treats Marcion very tenderly, attributes to him the Epistle to Diognetus.

riage,[1] and into the most rigid abstinence from flesh and wine. Like the Encratites, he only used water in the Eucharist, and out of hatred to Judaism he made the Sabbath a fast. His system was sterner than Montanism itself, except that he allowed reiterated baptisms.[2] Many minor errors were necessarily affiliated to his false views of a Demiurge and a merely phantasmal Christ, who descended from heaven as a full-grown man.[3] His critical and intellectual views were astonishingly baseless, and his genius was so little speculative that the gaps and inconsistencies of his system laid him open at once to the refutation of good reasoners. Tertullian was able to wound him in many places through the joints of a harness ill-fitted for purposes of defence. He addresses him, not without reason, as "inconsiderantissime Marcion!"[4] Yet Marcionites flourished two centuries later,[5] and it was not till the sixth century that the sect became extinct.

Tertullian's tract "Against the Valentinians" is less original than any of his works. He speaks of it as being in large measure a compilation, and much of it is translated from the first book of Irenaeus against the Gnostics. He could not have the least sympathy with the profound and poetic conceptions which Valentinus unfortunately built into a Gnostic system; and it is very doubtful whether he rightly understood them.

[1] He excluded all who lived with their wives from baptism and the Eucharist (*c. Marc.* i. 34); but one who died as a catechumen might be vicariously baptized. On the other hand, catechumens and full Church members worshipped side by side; Jer. *ad Gal.* vi. 6.

[2] Ephiphan. *Haer.* 42.

[3] Ἀγεννητὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Hippol. *Philos.* vii. 31. We derive our chief knowledge of Marcion's views from Tertullian and from an Armenian bishop named Esnig, who wrote in the fifth century. See Neander, ii. 174, ϵ.τ.

[4] *C. Marc.* ii. 29.

[5] Theodor. *Ep.* 80. Theodoret tells a truly revolting story of one savage old Marcionite, *De Haeret. Fabulis*, i. 24.

The tract "Against Praxeas" gave him an opportunity of expressing his views on the Trinity and the Incarnation. Praxeas by "confounding the Persons" was guilty of Patripassianism; that is, he represented God the Father as dying on the cross. He fell into this extreme of error only from his desire to establish the absolute unity and monarchy of God. Praxeas was an Asiatic who had gained honour as a confessor. He had already been refuted at Rome—*per quem Deus voluit*, says Tertullian, probably by himself. But he had repeated his heresy at Carthage, and he based it, as was common with heretics, on a few isolated texts.[1] His heresy resembles that of the Ephesian Noetus and the Libyan Sabellius, and it consisted in extenuating the Three Persons of the Trinity into three modes of operation.

Tertullian's refutation of his views is powerful, though his words necessarily lie open to misinterpretation. He cannot be blamed for not having attained to an accuracy of definition which resulted from the long struggles of a later age. For instance, he sometimes seems to imply that "there was a time when the Son was not."[2]

Tertullian also uses ambiguous language about the Holy Ghost, but this may arise from the vague senses attached to the word Spirit,[3] which was sometimes used by the Fathers to express the divine nature in Christ. In estimating the formally indefensible expressions into which he falls, theologians have shown a beautiful and unwonted charity. Petavius alone has

[1] Tert. *c. Prax.* 20. It was in the refutation of Sabellius that the wise and good Dionysius of Alexandria had fallen into the Arian-looking expression which he satisfactorily explained to his namesake at Rome.

[2] *C. Hermog.* iii. 18.

[3] See Bishop Kaye, pp. 552-564.

pronounced a harsh judgment. Bishop Bull, in his defence of the Nicene Creed, admits that his phrases are at variance with the *coeternity* of Christ, while he maintains His pre-existence and consubstantiality. It is unnecessary to avail ourselves of the "ill-natured industry" of Pamelius, Semler, and others, by collecting these passages. Suffice it to say that in all probability Tertullian *meant* to imply the orthodox doctrine, while he held that the *titles* "Word" and "Son" (not the *substance* of the Word and Son) were not strictly applicable till the Word and Son had been manifested.

Tertullian also wrote a tract against Hermogenes, a painter, of heterodox views, who had angered him, partly by opposing Montanism, partly by marrying more than once, and partly by painting heathen subjects. Tertullian, who hated heathen art and culture as well as all heathen religion,[1] begins and ends the tract in his usual evil style of virulent abuse. He begins by saying that Hermogenes paints unlawfully, marries assiduously, is doubly adulterous both with his pencil and his pen, and is indeed like the Hermogenes of 2 Tim. i. 15. He writes to refute his belief in the eternity of matter, and ends by saying that in describing matter as a confused, amorphous, and rotten chaos, Hermogenes had furnished a specimen of his own art, and had painted himself!

The tract "On the Flesh of Christ" is devoted to the refutation of Gnostic errors respecting the Incarnation, such as the fancy of Apelles that Christ had a sidereal body, and of Valentinus that His body was

[1] As he shows in the *De Idol.* and *De Spectaculis*. He regarded the position of a teacher of literature as incompatible with Christianity, and seems to think that Art can have no other stimulus but lust.

psychical.[1] The "Scorpiace," or Antidote to a Scorpion-Sting, was aimed at the wild Gnostic sect of Cainites, who spoke contemptuously of martyrdom, and maintained that Christ was the sole true Witness (μαρτύς). The very title *Scorpiace* is meant for a blast of scorn. Tertullian was the Calovius of the second century. He hated every approach to a theosophy, and wished religion to be "a rule of life, not a system of the universe."

The literary activity of Tertullian also led him to deal with various questions of anthropology and eschatology. In his work "On the Soul" he distinguishes between the soul and the mind, and argues that the soul is born and created, and has a body *sui generis*.[2] In favour of this opinion he appeals to Soranus, a physician who had written four books on the soul, in which he had examined the views of the philosophers, and gives to the soul a corporate substance, which naturally led him into the error that the soul is mortal. In support of his own view Tertullian also appeals to Scripture, especially to the parable of Dives and Lazarus. He proceeds to argue that the soul is simple and indivisible, though it has a figure of its own; that it possesses the inherent principle of intelligence; that it is free, and yet moulded by circumstances; that it is the ruling principle, and can divine the future. He then argues against the view of the Creationists that the soul comes down from heaven previous to its incorporation; and the

[1] At the close of this treatise he mentions some of the grotesque opinions of the heretics about *the manner* of Christ's session at the right hand of God.

[2] Comp. *De Carn. Christi.* 9: "Omne quod est corpus est sui generis," id. 11; "Nihil est incorporale nisi quod non est." Like the Anthropomorphite monks, he believed ever in a corporeal God — "Quis enim negabit Deum corpus esse?" (*c. Prax.* 7). Much of the severity and ruthlessness of his theology sprang from his too close assimilation of God to man.

Platonic doctrine of the soul's pre-existence; and the notion that the infant inhales the soul with its first breath. He maintains the view of the Traducianists, that the souls of all mankind are derived from Adam, and repudiates the Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration. He thinks that the soul grows with the man from infancy to youth and manhood, and that in it is the seed of sin. After some curious anatomic and physiological details he treats of sleep, which, with the Stoics, he defines to be "a temporary suspension of the activity of the senses." He seems to incline to the opinion that dreams are the sleeping activity of the soul; though it was related of Nero and others that they never dreamed. He tells after Pliny the curious story of Hermotimus, whose soul used to abandon his body while he slept. His wife revealed the secret to his enemies, who burned the unconscious body, so that the soul returning too late found no habitation![1] This he thinks might have been due to the action of an *incubus*. He regards "dreaming" as something analogous to the ecstasy of prophetic inspiration, and thinks that as some dreams come from God, others come from demons. He then passes on to speak of death, which he considers as the result of sin. He thinks that after death the souls of most men descend under the earth till the day of judgment, whilst the souls of the martyrs, alone excepted from the intermediate state, pass directly to heaven. Souls cannot pass from heaven to earth, but demons

[1] Plin. *H. N.* vii. 52. Tertullian did not rise above the ordinary credulity of his age. He believed the numberless miracles recorded in Pagan mythology, and he attributed them to the agency of demons. "The philosophic Pagans," says Dean Jeremie, "would probably have whispered some remark similar to that which Seneca makes at an attempt to explain an absurd fable—'Quanto expeditius erat dicere, mendacium et fabula est?'" (*Quaest. Nat.* iv. 7).

personate ghosts to work illusions.[1] He denies the *Psychopannychia*, or intermediate sleep of the soul,[2] but holds that after death the soul passes into a foretaste of misery or bliss. This treatise is not only learned, interesting, and able, but it throws great light on Tertullian's whole system of theology. It is, however, defaced as usual by sneers and insinuations. Even Socrates does not escape his slanders; he can see in him no inspiration but such as came from the devil. We have already noticed his appeal to the ecstatic vision of a Montanist sister who saw souls in bodily shape.[3]

One of his latest works on this subject was the tract "On the Resurrection of the Flesh," aimed, like so many of his writings, against the Gnostic tendency to regard the body and all matter as inherently worthless and corrupt. For the *possibility* of a bodily resurrection he appeals, as so many Christian writers have done, to false natural analogies,[4] and once more adduces the fable of the Phoenix.[5] He establishes this doctrine of the creed in his usual manner by arguments drawn both from reason and from Scripture.

[1] Tertullian, like Justin Martyr, alludes incessantly to the work of angels and demons. His view of demons is partly derived from the Book of Enoch (*De Cult. Fem.* i. 3), and he thinks that they sprang from the union of corrupt angels with women. They are the source of all mischief, and error, and idolatry, and furious passion. See the passages collected by Bishop Kaye, pp. 214-221.

[2] This doctrine was also repudiated in the 40th article.

[3] The importance attached to the ministry of women appears in the Acts of Thekla, and was a prominent feature in Montanism. Epiphanius says that the sect had female bishops and female presbyters, on the ground of the words "there is neither male nor female." Firmilian, in his letter to Cyprian (*infra*), tells with no sympathy the story of a poor Montanist prophetess who in her zeal walked with bare feet in mid-winter over the wilds of Mount Taurus to preach to the poor Cappadocians in a time of earthquakes and persecutions.

[4] Pearson follows him in this mistake, and gives a translation from this tract in his "On the Creed," art. 11.

[5] *De Res. Carn.* 13.

The interesting and vigorous little address to Scapula was probably one of the last of Tertullian's writings.[1] As he alludes in it to a total eclipse of the sun it must have been written after A.D. 210. It is addressed to Scapula, who was proconsul of Africa about A.D. 211, and who showed a very hostile spirit towards the Christians. The Praefects of Numidia and Mauretania were at least content with putting the Christians to death with the sword; but Scapula, going far beyond the decree of Trajan, ordered them to be burnt, and tortured them even after they had confessed. Tertullian begins by energetically repudiating any motive of fear. We do not in the least dread or fear you, he says, for in becoming Christians we know that we must be ready to sacrifice our lives. On the contrary, we rejoice more when we are condemned than when we are absolved. We write for your sakes, not our own—for we are bidden to love our enemies. We grieve at your ignorance, we pity your errors, we shudder at your future destiny. We worship the one God, you worship demons. Yet it is each man's inalienable prerogative and right to worship what he deems sacred, and a man's religion neither harms nor advantages his neighbour. It is even contrary to religion to coerce religion, which ought to be embraced voluntarily, not under compulsion, since victims are demanded only from the willing soul.[2] Even, therefore, if you compel us to sacrifice you will do your gods no good, unless they are contentious, which, as

[1] It is a brief summary of the topics urged in the *Apologeticus*.

[2] *Ad Scap.* 2. This memorable sentence has often been quoted by the friends of religious tolerance, "Tamen humani juris et naturalis potestatis est unicuique quod putaverit colere, nec alii obest aut prodest alterius religio. Sed *nec religionis est cogere religionem* quae sponte suscipi debeat non vi." Baur calls it "The Protestant principle of freedom of faith and conscience, as an inherent attribute of the conception of religion."

gods, they cannot be; they will not even desire sacrifices from the unwilling. The judgment of the true God is in the future. We are innocent, and you charge us with sacrilege. We have never joined rebels, yet you brand us as disloyal. We are enemies to none, we obey all lawful authority. We too sacrifice for the Emperor, but our sacrifices are prayers, not the blood-offerings in which demons revel. Numerous as we are, almost the larger half of the citizens, we live in modesty and silence. Yet we grieve over the calamities you will assuredly bring down upon yourselves. Scant harvests, cataclysms of rain, fiery visions over the walls of Carthage, a total eclipse of the sun at Utica, were meant to warn you. When in the presidency of Hilarion the cry arose "No *areae* (cemeteries) for the Christians!" The Pagans had no *areae* (threshing-floors), for they gathered in no harvests.[1] Vigellius Saturninus,[2] who first persecuted us, was stricken blind. Claudius Herminianus, in Cappadocia, angered by the conversion of his wife, and acting cruelly to the Christians, was stricken with worms, and exclaimed, "Let no one know, lest the Christians rejoice." Caecilius Capella, in the catastrophe at Byzantium, exclaimed, "Rejoice, Christians!" Those who may *seem* to have escaped have only been reserved for the final judgment. Think only of the misfortunes which have fallen on *you* personally since you condemned Mavilus of Adrumetum to the wild beasts!

I do not want to frighten you. I only warn you not to fight against God. You can do your duty and yet prove that you are humane by not exceeding your duty, as you are doing. Other Roman governors, even more resolute and cruel than you, have acted in this spirit.

[1] *Ad Scap.* 3, Tertullian is fond of these paronomasias.
[2] Proconsul of Africa, about A.D. 200.

Cincius Severus used actually to suggest to the Christians what answer they might give so as to be dismissed. Vespronius Candidus set a Christian free because he did not choose to be dictated to by clamour. Asper openly expressed his dislike to these prosecutions, and would not compel a Christian to sacrifice. Pudens at once dismissed a Christian who was brought before him, and tore up the charge, seeing that it was a case of vexatious accusation. Why cannot you act in the same way? The Christians do nothing but good. How many have they liberated from demoniacal possession? Severus, the father of the Emperor (Caracalla), kept in his palace a Christian physician named Proculus, surnamed Torpacion, who had healed him by oil, and he openly connived at the Christianity of many noble persons, and forbade their persecution. Marcus Aurelius, in his German expedition, was saved from drought by the prayers of Christian soldiers.[1] How often have we brought down the rain by our supplications? Look at our blameless lives. In return for so much innocence, so much integrity, so much justice, so much modesty, fidelity, truthfulness, we are burned alive for the living God!

Your cruelty is our glory. Take care that we do not come forward in a body to meet your assaults. In Asia, when the Proconsul Arrius Antoninus began his persecution, the Christians of the whole state came to declare themselves before his tribunal, and wrung from him the exclamation, "Wretches! if you want to die, have you no precipices or halters?"[2] How will you treat such numbers? Where will you get swords enough or fires enough? Will you decimate all Carthage, and slay

[1] An allusion to the so-called miracle of the "Thundering Legion," which falls into very small and uncertain dimensions when subjected to historical criticism.

[2] Ὦ δειλοί εἰ θέλετε ἀποθνήσκειν κρημνοὺς ἢ βρόχους ἔχετε.

among your victims many, it may be, of your own friends and relations? Spare yourself, if not us; spare Carthage, if not yourself; spare the province, which, since the announcement of your intention, has been exposed to tumults and calamities. We have but one Master—God—He is before you, He cannot be hidden; but you cannot harm Him. Your masters are, after all, but men that shall die. Nor can you suppress this sect of ours. It is but built up by seeming destruction. For every one who beholds so much endurance cannot get rid of the impression, but is kindled into inquiry, and becomes himself a speedy convert!

We may here notice the wide difference of tone between the Greek and Latin apologists. Both indeed rebut the calumnies which were current against the Christians; both point to the dignity and innocence of the Christian character; both dwell on the absurdities and infamies of the prevailing Paganism. But while the Greek apologists—Quadratus, Aristides, Melito, Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, Origen, and others—entered more thoroughly and philosophically into the abstract defence of Christianity, the Latin apologists—Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Arnobius, and Lactantius—dwelt more upon legal considerations, and insist on the injustice and illegality with which Christian citizens are treated, in spite of their many services. The Latin apologists also seem less able than the Greek to give any recognition to the better aspects of Pagan life and the nobler elements of Greek philosophy. Their tone is more contemptuous, their warfare more internecine. They are more eloquent and more aggressive, but less profound.

This, so far as we are aware, was the last writing of Tertullian, and it shows that the fire of his spirit was by no means quenched. Persecution ceased A.D. 212, and

the Christians were left unmolested till A.D. 235, through the reigns of Caracalla, Elagabalus, and Alex. Severus.

Tertullian's writings owe their preservation in part to their learning, in which they abound, and the wealth of information which they furnish on the opinions and history of the Church of the second century. In the Apologies, for instance, he gives us a curious insight into the moral and intellectual absurdities which were credulously accepted by the mob as constituting the belief and practice of Christianity.[1] It was actually believed by Pagans that Christians worshipped an ass's head. He refers the ridiculous slander to Tacitus about the Jews,[2]—whom with a poor pun on his name he calls not "tacit" but most loquacious of lies,—and to whom in refutation he refers to his own testimony that when "Pompey forced his impious way into the Holy of Holies he found there, to his amazement, nothing at all, *vacua omnia!*" But if Christians did not worship an ass Pagans did worship *Epona*, the goddess of mares, and various dog-headed and goat-shaped deities. He then refers to the impious jest of a buffoon, an apostate Jew, who exhibited in Rome a picture of a hoof-footed, ass-eared figure, wearing a toga and carrying a book with the inscription, "The God of the Christians, *Onokoites*," which seems to mean "ass of a priest" (*asinarius sacerdos*). The origin of this calumny, by a man who lived by fighting with beasts, is a mere matter of conjecture, though some have fancied that it may have been a ribald misinterpretation of some Gnostic gem. The passage received a curious illustration in 1856, when a *graffito* was discovered on a wall of the Palatine,

[1] *Apol.* 16; *ad Nat.* i. 14; Minuc. Felix, *Octav.* 9, 28.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* v. 4; Plut. *Symp.* iv. 5, sect. 2; comp. Diod. Sic. xxxiv. *fr.* Jos. *c. Ap.* ii. 7.

which is believed to be as old as the second century, and in which a man is represented as worshipping a crucified ass-headed figure, with the inscription ΑΛΕΞΑΜΕΝΟΣ ΣΕΒΕΤΕ ΘΕΟΝ, "Alexamenos worships God."

This grotesque charge was, as Tertullian says, no more than a nine days' wonder. But it was far different with another darker and deadlier accusation. It was again and again asserted that the Christians met at night, killed a child and ate it, and then, having tied dogs to the candelabra and thrown food before them, got the lights extinguished, and in that dog-made darkness were guilty of such orgies as could not be named.[1] It was actually necessary for Tertullian to treat this charge seriously, and he does so with great power. He shows that it is due only to lying rumour; and that though the Christians were daily beset by spies and foes, and surprised in assemblies which persecutions had driven into secrecy, yet never once had anything of the kind been discovered. And then he indignantly asks these calumniators whether Christians are not men like themselves, or whether they took Christians for Cynopae or Sciapods, and non-human monsters capable of monstrosities which human nature itself rejected with spontaneous horror. And he has the fatal retort that such infamies, falsely charged on the Christians, belonged in some of their forms to the mythology, and even to the common life, of their heathen slanderers.[2] They were guilty of the twofold blindness of seeing that which was not, and of not seeing that which is. Yet the sad truth must be told that when Tertullian is in his turn

[1] On these *Θυεστεῖα δεῖπνα* and *Οἰδιπόδειοι μίξεις* see also Athenag. *Apol.* 3, Theophil. *ad Autol.* iii. etc.

[2] *Apol.* 7-10; *ad Nat.* i. 15, 16, where he tells a terrible story of daily Pagan life.

writing against the Catholics, whom he calls the carnal, he does not hesitate to charge them with being guilty in their love-feasts of analogous, if less deadly immoralities. Such is the purblind fury and mendacity of party zeal, even when it assumes the championship of the most stainless Christianity!

But it is partly in refutation of these enormous slanders that Tertullian gives us his interesting picture of the early Christian assemblies—a picture which may be paralleled with that of Pliny. Christians, he says, were a body united by a common profession, a common discipline, and a common hope. They met for prayer that they might wrestle with God by united force, a violence in which God delights. Some of the prayers offered were accepted forms.[1] They would not sacrifice for the emperors, but they offered prayers for them, the only sacrifice which God accepts. The prayers were offered with hands elevated and outspread, and were followed by the kiss of peace. They read such parts of the Scriptures as seemed suitable to the occasion, thereby cherishing their faith, encouraging their confidence, stimulating their hope, confirming their obedience. Exhortations were delivered, and rebukes administered, after careful enquiry and judgment. Tried men of the elders presided, and the congregation joined in the responses. The offertory was voluntary and monthly, and was given to the poor, the old, the sick, the shipwrecked, the prisoners, the exiles, the orphans.[2] "See," said the Pagans, "how these Christians love one another," which seems to them marvellous, for they hate one another! All called each other brethren, and had their goods in common. Their feasts were simple and sober. After ablutions, and the bringing in of lights,

[1] *De Orat.* 24. [2] *Apol.* 39.

every one who had a voice sang a hymn, either original or from Scripture. The feast began and closed with prayer, and all retired from it as from a school of virtue, with hearts full of modesty and peace. The noble burst of eloquence with which he ends his tract "On Prayer" testifies to the depth and sincerity of his feelings on the subject.[1]

Very interesting too, but needless to examine here, are the analyses of the origin of Pagan mythology, which Tertullian furnishes from Varro and other authorities. If his minute antiquarian information is sometimes lavished with absolute pedantry, it has yet preserved for us many curious details. On idolatry and its evil secrets he pours a flood of scathing indignation which reminds us of the latter chapters of the prophet Isaiah.

But Tertullian's works were valued also from the intense personality of the man himself. He was certainly the most powerful writer who had appeared since the days of the Apostles. To estimate his merits fully we must remember that he created Christian Latin literature; that, as Harnack says, it sprang from him full grown, and that before him it could possess little or nothing but a translation of the Bible, the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, and the Muratorian fragments. Narrow, rigid, realistic as is his system, it is yet "traversed by splendid gleams of genius and of eloquence." His style is unique. It is "rich in thought, and destitute of form, passionate and hair-splitting, eloquent and obscure." Like Jerome, he wields the Latin language with a new force, and introduces into it some elements which were untried even by Cicero. He has been often charged with an affectation

[1] *De Orat.* 24.

which led him to delight in archaic and far-fetched phrases,

> "Which would have made Quintilian stare and gasp;"

but it is more likely that his style is stamped with a North-African provincialism, in which were still current the terms and phrases which had been familiar to Plautus and Ennius centuries earlier.[1] He contributed in no small degree to the formation of the technical language of Latin theology. If he is so often difficult and obscure, it is because he had to express the thoughts of a bold, rugged, and turbulent intellect, embittered by antagonism, darkened by self-maceration and passion, and struggling with the perplexity engendered by endless controversies. He puts no restraint either on his feelings or his language, but pours forth his rage and scorn and sarcasm, or develops his forensic sophisms in dealing with the most solemn and sacred subjects. His style has been compared by Balzac to ebony, at once dark and resplendent. His terseness and energy make his pages sparkle with expressions which have become proverbial. "What greater pleasure is there than to despise pleasure."[2] "The blood of martyrs is germinant."[3] "Christians are made, not born."[4] "Christ is truth, not custom."[5] "Where there are three, even be they laymen, there is the Church."[6] "Are not we laymen too priests?"[7] "It is contrary to religion to

[1] Gilbert Wakefield said that "the words marked as inelegant are in reality the most genuine remains of pure Roman composition." This is really the answer to Ruhnken's complaint that "sibimet ipse linguam finxit duram, horridam, Latinisque inauditam." On the other hand, a glance at the *Clavis Tertulliana* is sufficient to prove that he was fond of the strange, uncouth, technical words which we do not find in his countrymen Cyprian or Augustine.

[2] *De Spect.* 29. [3] *Apol.* 50. [4] Id. 18. [5] *De Virg. Vel.* 1.
[6] *De Exhort. Cast.* 7. [7] Id.

compel religion."[1] "I believe, because it is absurd."[2] "It is absolutely credible, because it is absurd—it is certain, because impossible."[3] "What has Christ to do with Plato, or the Church with the Academy?"[4] "No one, not even a human being, will wish himself to be adored by an unwilling votary."[5] "God has His witnesses—the sum total of what we are and in which we are."[6] "Truth is not on the surface but in the inmost heart."[7] "The human race has always deserved ill of God."[8] "How wise an arguer does ignorance seem to herself!"[9]

These are sentiments and turns of expression which are not easily forgotten, and there are many more shining out like jewels on a dark background on almost every every page. The style is of the man; it is incandescent as the heart from which it is poured forth; it burns with the sombre flame visible through the smoke of a volcano.[10] Austere, fiery, passionate, satirical, dictatorial, perverse, learned, hyperbolical, he reminds us of no writer so much as of Carlyle. But much as Carlyle resembled Tertullian in vehemence and exaggeration he never sunk so low into subtle special pleadings, "quaint conceits, small retorts."

One or two passages from his writings may serve to give some illustration of his manner. In the following beautiful paragraph he is endeavouring to persuade

[1] *Ad Scap.* 2. [2] *De Carn. Christ.* 5. [3] Id.
[4] *De Praescr.* 7. [5] *Apol.* 24.
[6] *C. Marc.* i. 10, "Deus habet testimonia, totum hoc quod sumus et in quo sumus."
[7] *De Resur. Carn.* 3, "Veritas non in superficie est, sed in medullis."
[8] *Apol.* 40. [9] *De Spect.* 2.
[10] See some eloquent remarks in Pressensé, ii. 1, 431. The classical Lactantius (*Div. Inst.* v. 1) is offended with his tumultuous style. He calls him "in eloquendo parum facilis, et minus comtus, et multum obscurus."

Marcion that the Creator of the world is very good to us :—

"Contracting their nostrils, the most shameless Marcionites turn themselves to the destruction of the works of the Creator. 'Ah! to be sure,' they exclaim, 'the world is a grand work, and worthy of the Creator! Is then the Creator by no means a God?' 'He is a God evidently.' 'Well then the world is not unworthy of God, for God has done nothing unworthy of Himself, although he made the world not for Himself but for man, and although everything made is inferior to Him that made it. . . . I will come down to humble things. One single floweret from the hedges, I do not say from the meadows, a single tiny shell of any sea, I say not from the Red Sea, a single tiny feather of the moorfowl, I say nothing of the peacock, will, I presume, declare to you that the Creator is but a mean artificer! And when you make merry over the minute creatures which the mightiest artificer has purposely endowed with intellect or strength, thus teaching us that greatness is manifested in littleness, just as the Apostle teaches us that strength is perfected in weakness; imitate if you can the hexagons of the bee, the hills of the ant, the webs of the spider, the threads of the silkworm; endure if you can those mean creatures of your bed and of your roof, the venom of the cantharis, the darts of the mosquito, the spear and trumpet of the gnat.[1] Of what kind will the greater creatures be, when you are helped or harmed by such small things, that you may not even in small things despise the Creator? Lastly, make a circuit around yourself, survey man within and without. Even this work of our God will please you, because your Lord, that better God, loved it so well, and for the sake of which he toiled to descend from these heavens into these poverty-stricken elements, for the sake of which, even in this little cell of the Creator, He was crucified. But He, even until now, has not disdained the water with which He washes his own people, nor the oil wherewith He anoints them, nor the mixture of milk and honey wherewith He nurtures them as children, nor the bread by which he represents His own very body, needing in His own peculiar sacrament the beggarly elements of the Demiurge. But you, a disciple above his master, a slave above his Lord, have a sublimer wisdom than He, destroying what He requires. I wish to examine your sincerity, by seeing whether you do not yourself long for the things which you destroy. A foe to the sky, yet you like the freshness of the sky in your dwellings. You despise the earth, and yet you press out its very fatness for your food. You depreciate

[1] "Et tubam et lanceam."

the sea too, yet you constantly use its abundance, which you regard as the holier food. Should I offer you a rose you will not disdain its maker. Hypocrite! . . . You vilify the very things in which you live and die."[1]

In another passage, translated by Bishop Pearson, he points to phenomena, which he regards as natural analogies to the Resurrection :—

"Gaze now on those exemplifications of divine power. Day dies into night, and is everywhere entombed in shadows. The glory of the world has its obsequies, all its substance is tarnished. All things grow dull, voiceless dumb; everywhere there is a holiday and rest. And so we mourn for the lost light. And yet once more with all its own beauty, its dower, its sun, the same, and unharmed, and complete, it revives for the universal world; slaying night, which is its own death, rending asunder its own sepulture of darkness, extant as its own heir, until night too revives, herself too with her own retinue. For both the rays of the stars are rekindled, which the rising of the dawn had extinguished, and the distant groups of constellations are brought back, which a temporary separation had taken away, and the specular mirrors of the moon are readorned, which her monthly course had worn down. Winter and summer roll round in season, and the boons of spring and autumn, with their power, their characteristics, and their fruits. Moreover, the earth too receives from heaven its training to clothe the trees after their stripping, to colour the flowers anew, to spread out the herbage again, to display the same seeds which had been oversunned and hot, to display them till they have been consumed. Marvellous method, preserving after defrauding, it cuts off in order to restore, it destroys to guard, it spoils to renew, it first diminishes that it may ever enlarge, and, in truth, it restores richer and riper blessings than it took away—with a destruction which in reality is increase, and by a wrong which is interest, and by a loss which is gain. Let me say, once for all, the condition of all things is renewal. All things when they have departed return to their first condition, all things begin when they have ceased, they are ended that they may be born. Nothing perishes save into salvation. Therefore the whole revolving wheel of existence bears witness to the resurrection of the dead."[2]

Many other passages, no less beautiful than those, are to be found in Tertullian's writings. Few will deny

[1] *C. Marc.* i. 13, 14. [2] *De Resur. Carn.* 12.

that he deserves the eulogy of Vincent of Lerins, who speaks of his unrivalled learning, his overwhelming force of reasoning, his penetrating intellect, his pregnant and victorious style, and who places him first among the Latins of that day as he places Origen first among the Greeks.

Yet if both were foremost among the writers of these times, how striking is the contrast between them! Both were defenders of the faith; both were treated as heretics; both were independent thinkers and voluminous authors; both felt a deep love of Christ, and were animated by sincere desire for truth; both exercised a profound influence over the Church. But Origen was a mystic, Tertullian a puritan. Origen was profound and speculative, Tertullian narrow and logical. Origen was gentle and tolerant, Tertullian bitter and exclusive. Nor do they differ less in their style. "The eloquence of the one," says Pressensé, "is large and limpid as his genius; it is a beautiful river, abundant and majestic; that of the other is a mountain torrent. Origen lightens, Tertullian thunders. Origen speaks to philosophers like a Christian philosopher; Tertullian is a tribune of the people who has gone down to the forum and the cross roads to kindle the passions of the crowd; he is the ancient orator with his unrestrained gestures, his vivid images, his grandiose pathos." But, like the popular orator, he often condescends to the grossest sophisms, the most irritating word-splitting, and the most virulent abuse, which Origen never does. In Origen we see all that was best in Gnosticism, in Tertullian all that is best in Montanism, which was emphatically anti-Gnostic. The large hopefulness, the spiritual profundity, the allegorising exegesis, the philosophic method of the great Alexandrian are at the opposite pole to the gloomy

ruthlessness, the dogmatic rigidity, the materialistic extravagances of the Carthaginian teacher who held philosophy in profound contempt, flouted a "Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic Christianity," and cared for nothing which was not practical.

Two notices may close the life of Tertullian. "He is said," writes Jerome, "to have lived to a decrepit age, and to have written many treatises which are no longer extant." "After his lapse into Montanism," says Augustine, "he was separated even from the Montanists, and propagated conventicles of his own." A miserable body of "Tertullianists" is said to have existed long after his death. Sad fate! The Catholic became a schismatic, the orthodox champion a leader of heretics. Yet the Church has dealt gently and forgivingly with him; and though he spoke of her sons as "the carnal," and dared to reiterate against them insinuations which were more discreditable on his lips than on those of the heathen, she accepts the fruits of his zeal and genius, and, in spite of his errors, reckons him among her teachers. We may trust that as old age grew on him he was able to draw nearer and nearer to the light, and that his stormy day was closed with a sunset of peace and rest.

VI

ST. CYPRIAN

"At Concordia in Italy," says Jerome, "I saw an old man named Paulus. He said that in his youth he had met with an aged secretary of the blessed Cyprian, who told him that Cyprian never passed a day without reading some portion of Tertullian's works, and used frequently to say, '*Da magistrum*,' 'Give me my master,' meaning Tertullian."[1] Cyprian did little more in *literature* than to adapt the style of Tertullian; and Augustine "stood upon the shoulders of them both."

The writings of Cyprian are sufficient to prove how

CYPRIAN'S WORKS, AND LIFE.

Ed. Princeps, Rome, 1471. Best edition: W. Hartel, *S. Cypriani Opera Omnia*, 3 vols. Vienna, 1868-1871. The works of Cyprian are translated in the Oxford Library of the Fathers, 1840, and by R. G. Wallis in the Ante-Nicene Library, 2 vols. Edinb 1868.

LIFE.—Pontius, *Vita Cypriani*. *Acta Proconsularia Martyrii Cypriani*. Ruinart, *Act. Mart. II.* There are lives of St. Cyprian by Gervaise (Par. 1717), Rettberg (Gött. 1831), Poole (Oxf. 1840), Freppel (2d ed. Par. 1873), and others. See, too, Pearson, *Annales Cyprianiei*, Oxf. 1682; Dodwell, *Dissert. Cyprian.* Oxf. 1684 (one of which is the famous *De paucitate martyrum*); Ebert, *Gesch. d. Christl. lat. Literat.* Leipz. 1874.

[1] *De Vir. ill.* 53, "Traces of Tertullian in his almost heretical treatises may also be detected in the most finished sentences of St. Leo.'—Newman, *Gram. of Assent*, p. 366.

deep an influence Tertullian had exercised upon his mind.[1] Like him, he wrote "On the Dress of Virgins," "On the Grace of God" (in Baptism), on Idolatry, Patience, Prayer, Penitence, and Martyrdom.[2] Yet the two African teachers are singularly unlike each other. Intellectually Tertullian was an originator, Cyprian a populariser. As a Churchman Tertullian was the vigorous antagonist of the Episcopal party, Cyprian was their foremost representative. Tertullian has been called "the father of Latin theology," Cyprian "the father of the hierarchy." Tertullian was vehement, sarcastic, impulsive, defiant; Cyprian was calm, practical, authoritative. The eloquence of Tertullian is like a torrent of molten lava, that of Cyprian like a limpid if somewhat shallow stream. Tertullian was a man of genius, and Cyprian was a man of talents who borrowed wholesale from his predecessors. In character and intellect Cyprian resembled Irenaeus rather than Tertullian, though he was far inferior to the Bishop of Lyons in depth and learning.[3]

The details of a great part of Cyprian's life are well known to us from his own writings and letters. We

[1] All my references to Cyprian will be made to the handy little edition of his writings by Goldhorn, Lips. 1838.

[2] A comparison of the titles of their works is significant :—

Tertullian.	Cyprian.
De Cultu Feminarum.	De Habitu Virginum.
De Virginibus Velandis.	
De Baptismo.	De Gratia Dei.
De Idololatria.	De Idolorum Varietate.
Adversus Judaeas.	Testimonia adv. Judaeos.
De Praescriptionibus.	De Unitate Ecclesiae.
De Oratione.	De Oratione Dominica.
Ad Martyres.	De Exhortatione Martyrii.
De Patientia.	De Bono Patientiae.
De Poenitentia.	De Lapsis.

[3] "Cyprian polished the language that Tertullian had made, sifted his thoughts, rounded them off, and turned them into current coin."—Harnack.

also have a biography of him written by his deacon Pontius, who shared the exile which preceded his martyrdom. A deacon stood in closest relation to his bishop, as Athanasius did to Alexander, and Pontius had every opportunity that a biographer could desire. But his work, though Jerome praises it,[1] is unsatisfactory in the extravagance both of its superstition and of its panegyric. It gives us some valuable details, but it dwells on marvellous visions, and too much neglects the historic and human element. In these respects it is even less satisfactory than the life of St. Ambrose by Paulinus, and that of St. Martin by Sulpicius Severus.

Respecting the earlier part of Cyprian's life we are furnished with no details. Pontius refuses to say anything about him before his "new birth" in baptism, which he regards as the real beginning of his life. His original name was Thascius Cyprianus. He was born, perhaps at Carthage,[2] about A.D. 200, of heathen parents, who were both wealthy and distinguished. He evidently inherited a considerable estate, and held a high position, and to these circumstances was partly due his rapid elevation to the episcopate.

There were but two careers which lay open to the Pagan youth of those days—the army and the bar. He chose the latter, but rather with a view to the study of eloquence than to the pursuit of law. He shows none of the legal knowledge which is so conspicuous in the pages of Tertullian, but had evidently paid much attention to rhetoric. He received a good education, and was acquainted with Greek.[3] Augustine implies that he was a senator.[4] Jerome says that he taught rhetoric with

[1] *De Vir. ill.* 68, "*egregium* volumen."
[2] Suid. Καρχηδὼν ἐξ ἧς ὥρμᾶτο. But see *Ep.* 7, ed. Fell.
[3] See Rettberg, p. 30. [4] Serm. xxxi. 7.

great applause. His works are far more classic in form and style than those of Tertullian, but he has none of the impassioned and resistless eloquence which vibrates in the pages of his master.

Whether he was married or not we are not told, though the fact has been erroneously inferred from a passage of Pontius. We only know that until ripe manhood, perhaps till the age of forty-six, he continued to be a heathen.[1] He was not free from heathen sins, though the charge that he used magic arts to gratify his evil passions seems to be a sheer fiction.[2] But in the world of heathendom he never felt at ease. He gave way to his infirmities from despair of better things.[3] Three influences led him to Christianity—the works of Tertullian, the holy Scriptures, and the teaching of the presbyter Caecilian, whose name he took in gratitude for his conversion, and who bequeathed to him the guardianship of his widow and children.

1. It seems likely that he was attracted to the writings of Tertullian more by their eloquence than by their Christianity. A teacher of rhetoric in Carthage could hardly neglect the works of the most eloquent declaimer whom Carthage had ever produced. Many must have read his treatises for the sake of their burning individuality who never felt the least interest in the subjects of which they treated.

[1] Jerome says he had been an "adsertor idololatriae," and see Pont. 14.

[2] A.D. 246 is usually fixed as the date of his conversion, when Pontius calls him "Supergressus vetustatis aetatem." The absence of any self-reproach so bitter as that of Augustine seems to show that he had not been a deep offender. The charge of magic (Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxiv. 8) seems to be founded on the confusion of Cyprian with a Bishop of Antioch of the same name; unless, indeed, as Rettberg and others think, this eastern Cyprian is a mere glimmering double of the African, whose existence was only due to an imaginative poem by the Empress Eudocia (Photius, *Cod.* 184; Martene and Durand, *Thes. Anecd.* iii. 1622).

[3] *Ep. ad Donat.* 3.

2. But a man of honest and inquiring mind like Cyprian would naturally be induced to turn from Tertullian to the Scriptures which he so incessantly quoted, and on which he mainly endeavoured to base his arguments. Cyprian read the Scriptures, but hardly, we must fear, as a profound and independent student. He could not fail to be won by their divine morality, and he saw in them a path of deliverance from the Paganism which he regarded with deepening dissatisfaction. He is said to have been specially impressed by the Book of Jonah.[1] But he shows little or no real understanding of the Scriptures. Of their primary contextual historic meaning he has no apprehension. To him, as to the scholastic Protestantism of the post-Reformation epoch, they mainly present themselves as a heap of proof texts. There is little original in the dogmatic and theoretic writings of Cyprian, but nothing in them is more unsatisfactory than his exegesis. It treats the Scriptures as a *nasus cereus* to which any orthodox interpretation may be affixed by any method, however arbitrary.[2] It was not from Holy Writ that Cyprian learnt his creed, but from oral teaching. What he learnt, and what he represents, is not primitive Christianity, but the Christianity of his own age, which had already attracted to itself a multitude of alien accretions.

3. It was probably to the presbyter Caecilian that he owed the tenor of his formal convictions; and all that he learnt from him and from the spirit of his times he regarded as the unquestioned teaching of the Catholic Church.

Of his general feelings with regard to Paganism and Christianity he has left us a sketch in his two earliest writings. These are the tract "On the Vanity of Idols,"

[1] Jer. *in Jon.* iii. [2] Böhringer, *Cyprian*, p. 284.

which is his farewell to heathendom as a religious system; and his "Letter to Donatus on the Grace of God," which gives the reason for his revolt from the religion of the Empire as a moral and social institution.

The tract "On the Vanity of Idols" is meant to prove "that idols are not gods, that God is one, and that salvation has been granted to believers through Christ." Many, even of the heathen, had arrived long ago at the conviction that idol-worship was an absurdity which only served the purpose of a popular convention. They had accepted in its place a god of the philosophers, an abstract and ideal being to whom neither the Stoics nor the Epicureans attributed much concern with the ordinary course of human life. Such a deity was nothing to Cyprian. Neither he nor any of the Fathers understood—as modern philological researches have enabled us to understand—the real origin of Polytheism. Cyprian adopted the feeble theory of Euhemerus, that the gods were merely eminent kings and heroes; and that of Tertullian and Minucius Felix—from whom he often borrows even verbally without the least acknowledgment—that the demons animated their statues and uttered their oracles.[1] The proofs of the divinity of Christ are inadequately grounded on Jewish prophecy, with a passing allusion to His miracles, resurrection, and ascension, and the constancy of Christian martyrs. The plagiarism evinced in this tract, which is a series of thoughts already expressed more forcibly by others, is no unusual phenomenon in the writings of the Fathers. For centuries we hear nothing but reverberated echoes of Tertullian and Origen, of Basil and Chrysostom. The ethics of plagiarism seem to be very undefined, and to

[1] See Tert. *Apol.* 12, 13, 21-23; *ad Nat.* i. 10 *seqq.* etc. The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix is also largely utilised.

vary in different ages. The Fathers probably thought that they were doing a useful work in utilising the thoughts of others. They did it with no dishonest purpose, nor was it their ambition to win credit by the publication of what was not their own.

Far more valuable is the letter to Donatus, which is the farewell of the writer to the world in which he hitherto had lived. He invites his friend to sit in imagination by his side, while the breeze fanned them as they rested under the grapes and vine-leaves, in perfect seclusion on a pleasant autumn day. Donatus is all attention, but Cyprian feels how incompetent he is for the task he has undertaken. His "*exilis ingenii angusta mediocritas*" can only produce poor fruit, but he will aim at sincerity, not at eloquence, while he tells the story of his mental change. While he was wandering in darkness, and was being tossed on the fluctuations of the world's sea, an alien from truth and light, he thought it a difficult thing to be born again, to pass into a new life of the soul by the laver of saving water, and while still bound by the body, to be changed in mind and soul. How, he exclaimed, can such a conversion be possible? How can the impulses of the natural temperament or the induration of ingrained habit be swiftly and suddenly laid aside? How can avarice, and luxury, and ostentation, and ambition be at once exchanged for self-denial, simplicity, humility? Will not drunkenness, pride, passion, lust, cruelty, still retain tenacity and seductiveness? He had himself been entangled in some of these vices, and he despaired of getting rid of them. At last, however, he was baptized, and not *ex opere operato* but by the spiritual influences and divine preparation of the heart, which made him a fit recipient of the grace of God, he found

the light and the healing which he had desired.[1] He appeals to Donatus to confirm the change which had been wrought in him by that death of guilt, that life of virtue. Of himself he will not boast, though indeed the utterance of gratitude differs widely from boastfulness; and he attributes his moral resurrection not to his own merit, but to the divine blessing.

Cyprian proceeds to set forth to his friend how great had been his gain in abandoning the heathen world. He bids him seat himself in fancy on some mountain-summit, and gaze down on what he has abandoned: on the high-roads blocked by brigands, the seas beset by pirates, the camps distracted by the bloody horror of many wars; on the world reeking with bloodshed, and the guilt which in proportion to its magnitude was extolled as glory. Then, if he turned his gaze to the cities, he will behold a society more gloomy than all solitude. In the gladiatorial games men were, so to speak, fattened for mutual slaughter, and publicly murdered to delight the mob by their massacre. Even uncondemned men fought in public with wild beasts, while their mothers and sisters paid large prices to witness the hideous spectacle. In the theatres the tragedies dealt with scenes of parricide and incest, and in the pantomimes all listeners were educated in the abysmal mysteries of pollution, while crimes were veneered with reverence because they were presented under the guise of mythology. Were it possible from their high mountain watch-tower to pierce into the secrets of guilty dwellings, yet viler depths of Satan, yet loathlier

[1] Tertullian, as we have seen, thought it best that baptism should be deferred till after infancy; but Cyprian, with his synod of sixty-six bishops, A.D. 253, urged infant baptism as advisable (*Ep.* 64). In other respects the views of the two teachers were much the same.

passions of dishonour would be revealed. If for relief they turned their eyes to the publicity of the forum and the tribunal, they would not only see bribery run riot and injustice triumph, and innocence subverted, but also the spear, the sword, the executioner, the tearing iron claw, the rack, the stake, and the fire. Even public life and the career of honour had its own deep stains. Rewards were gained by flattery, the exaltation of the unworthy, the depression of the meritorious. Wealth was but another name for niggardly selfishness, ruinous luxury, and devouring anxiety. Men did not possess their riches; they were possessed by them. Even the dread summits of empire only meant a perpetual terror.[1] There was but one firm and unbroken tranquillity, but one safe harbour from the raging storm of the world. It was to despise the world, and think of immortality. It was to receive the free light and living water of the grace of God, and to have our hopes anchored in heaven. He ends by exhorting his friend to commune with God, to be rich to Him, and prove His gifts. Such poverty is better than all wealth. He who is poor yet rich to God will not desire fretted roofs and marble halls if he recognises that he is himself a temple of the Holy Ghost. It is now evening. Donatus has listened patiently. Let them spend the rest of the day in holy innocence. Not even the hour of banquet shall be free from heavenly grace. It shall be sober; it shall ring with Psalms such as Donatus knows by heart and can sing well. His hospitality will be still more precious to those whom he

[1] The worst that Cyprian says is borne out by the pictures of heathendom drawn by the heathens themselves — Seneca, Juvenal, Petronius, Apuleius, Lucian. See the dreadful picture in its ghastliest features, and with all authorities quoted, in Döllinger's *Judenthum und Heidenthum*. I have sketched outlines of the age in *Seekers after God*, pp. 36-64, and *The Witness of History to Christ*, pp. 129-133 (Hulsean Lectures).

best loves, if it be accompanied by spiritual reading, and if religious melody delights the ears.

Such is a brief outline of the most finished and elegant of Cyprian's writings. It was probably written in the autumn after his baptism. St. Augustine alludes to it with singular and undeserved disdain. After speaking of "that sweetness of style which dresses up its small and fugitive excellences in a prettiness of language which could not be justified even when applied to what is great and standard," he adds, "an instance of this occurs in an Epistle of St. Cyprian, which shows how his style was pruned of its redundance by the soundness of Christian doctrine, and subdued into a more grave and sober eloquence." He refers to all his later Epistles in proof that his maturer judgment preferred a less overflowing exuberance.[1] Nevertheless the personal incidents detailed in the letter to Donatus make it one of the most interesting of Cyprian's writings.

But while Cyprian thus published to the world the reasons which had driven him to take refuge from a corrupt society in the bosom of a holy faith, he evinced the sincerity of his conversion still more clearly by his change of conduct. One of his first acts was to sell a large part of his possessions and bestow them upon the poor. Pontius says that he sold all that he had. This can hardly be true. It would have been unlike the practical character of his intellect, which would enable him to see that Christ's command to the young ruler was special and individual. Moreover there are the clearest proofs that up to the very close of his life Cyprian was in easy if not in affluent circumstances. His function was to rule and organise. The needs of

[1] *De Doctr. Christ.* iv. 14.

his age were different from those of the century which could only be awoke from worldliness by the imaginative self-abnegation of a Francis of Assisi. To account for the money which we find to have been always at his command, Pontius says that by some divine intervention his house and gardens were restored to him, and that he was prevented from selling them once more by the dread of attracting the suspicion of the heathen. Probably his friends bought in the estate, and restored it to him again. There can be no question that by retaining and administering his hereditary revenues he rendered a far more valuable service to the poor than could have resulted from the immediate distribution of a capital sum.

The conduct of Cyprian in this act of self-sacrifice is a beautiful proof that he intended to be a Christian in something more than outward profession. His gardens, of which we perhaps have a sketch at the beginning of his letter to Donatus, seem to have been rich in trees and vineyards, and he was accustomed to gaze with delight on the enchantments of this delicious scene.[1] Yet he parted with the spot which he loved so well. Benevolence and almsgiving were to him the chief features of practical Christianity. His theology led him to believe in a sort of justification by works, and in the necessity of supplementing the grace of baptism by a continuance of meritorious deeds. There may have been many errors and imperfections in his philosophy of the plan of salvation, but such imperfections are as nothing when the heart is earnest and sincere.

Asceticism at that period began more and more to

[1] *Ad Donat.* 1. Viteam porticum frondea tecta fecerunt. Contemptis voluptariae visionis illecebris.

enter into the ideal of practical Christianity, and Cyprian we are told became an ascetic. Without a life of great simplicity he would not have come up to the prevalent conception of saintliness, but his asceticism was governed by the strong good sense which is so prominent in his character. The vagueness of his biographer's allusion, and the absence of all details, show that he did not indulge in those excesses of fasting and self-maceration which would have had no other result than the useless enfeeblement of his bodily and mental strength.

The conversion of such a man—a man so rich, so distinguished, so eloquent—a man of ripe age, of serene countenance, of noble presence, of high endowments, could not fail to be valued by the Church of Carthage as a triumph of Christianity. And it was evident that he did not mean to be an idle convert, but a defender of the faith. How long he remained a catechumen we do not know, but it must have been within a year of his baptism that he was ordained presbyter. Such an ordination required the approval of the bishop, the clergy, and the community in general, and the rapidity with which it was conferred on the new convert shows how deep was the impression which had been made on the Church by his commanding personality.

It was probably during the brief period of his presbyterate that he wrote his *Testimonies against the Jews*.[1] It is in three books. The first is devoted to the proof that the Jews have fallen from the grace of God, and that their forfeited privileges have been transferred to Christians. The second deals with the nature and work of Christ, and the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament in His Person. The third is a sort of appendix which has but little connexion

[1] It is dedicated to Quirinus, whom he addresses as "son."

with the two former. It was written at the request of a layman named Quirinus as a "breviary of divine precepts," a compendium of instruction which might be read rapidly and frequently. It is a collection of the most heterogeneous character, which deals under one hundred and twenty brief heads with matters so wholly disparate in importance as "that we ought not to grieve the Spirit of God," and "that we ought not to curl our hair." It passes from the rule "that we ought not to pluck out the hair of the beard," and "that we ought to rise when a bishop or presbyter enters," to the proposition "that the end of the world is coming suddenly."[1] Few of even Cyprian's books have less independent value than this. There is little in the argument which had not already been urged much more scientifically by Justin in his dialogue against Trypho, and by Tertullian in his third book against Marcion, and elsewhere. The worst defect however of Cyprian's *Testimonia* is not its secondhandness, but the valueless laxity of his Scripture proofs.[2] As far as his exegesis is concerned, he builds on the most shifting sand. The texts which he cites in defence of his propositions are heaped up in a manner so devoid of cogency that however implicitly they may have been accepted by Quirinus, they could have produced no other effect but irritation on the mind of any well-instructed Jew. It is singular that this book should consist almost entirely of quotations from Scripture, of which there is not one in the two earlier treatises.

Cyprian could hardly have remained a presbyter for

[1] *Praef. in lib.* iii. "Collecta sunt a me quaedam praecepta dominica et magisteria divina."

[2] The Latin version of the texts has much critical interest and importance.

much longer than a year when the Bishop of Carthage died. It was an established custom of nearly all Churches that in the choice of the successor three classes should take a part—the bishops of the province, the clergy of the city, and the people in general.[1] Sometimes the people only exercised a right of veto on the choice of the bishops and clergy; sometimes the bishops and clergy overruled the nomination of the people:—but that choice was regarded as most legitimate which commanded the suffrages of all three orders of Christians.

Cyprian was a neophyte, a presbyter of yesterday, but the people demanded that he should be nominated. The choice of the people, uninfluenced by ecclesiastical cabals, subterranean intrigues, and petty jealousies, was frequently wiser and truer than that of the clergy, as was so conspicuously proved in the case of Ambrose and of Augustine.[2] To the multitude of Christians it was of vital importance that their bishop should be a man of mark, and neither the mere fugleman of a party nor a man of mediocrity whose elevation could wake no jealousies because he was too indefinite in his convictions and too commonplace in character to arouse antagonism. To the humbler and poorer it was also a daily advantage that he should be a man of large heart and open hand, who could, if need were, defend their feebleness and relieve their necessities. Cyprian was the most distinguished man in the community, and the people demanded his election. Not so however the presbyters. Many of them disliked the choice. They were far senior to him in the ministry, and they did not see why they should be passed over.

[1] Cypr. *Ep.* 67, § 6.

[2] Pontius, *Vit.* 6. "Adhuc neophytus et, ut putabatur, novellus." Nectarius and Eusebius of Caesarea were also elected while yet neophytes.

Cyprian himself must have been aware that he was marked out for the office of a bishop, but at first he endeavoured to discourage his own election, partly no doubt from a certain modesty, but also because he foresaw the opposition of discontented presbyters. His reluctance only stimulated the enthusiasm of the people. They besieged his house, and left him no peace till he had accepted their nomination. Whatever may have been the wishes of the bishops and clergy, they confirmed the popular suffrage. The prerogative of the multitude could only be resisted at the cost of a tumult, and thus in A.D. 248 Cyprian was duly appointed to the "throne" of Carthage, and was henceforth addressed formally by the honourable title of *Papa*.[1]

He was a born bishop, and he identified himself absolutely with the duties and dignity of his office. In him the lessons of Tertullian were applied in a very different direction to that followed by the great Montanist. Tertullian had maintained the priesthood, and the independence of the laity; Cyprian, though he resisted the dictation of Rome, became the chief supporter of the visible and external unity of the Catholic Church, the chief champion of monarchical episcopacy. No doubt the entirely new conception of a bishop's infallible autocracy was partly due to the needs of the time. "The fires of Roman persecution had much to do with hardening and shaping, as into a point of tempered steel, that marvellous episcopal organisation which was one day to penetrate the world."[2]

[1] The Bishop of Alexandria seems to have been the first who bore this title, then the Bishop of Carthage, later still the Bishop of Rome. The African bishops "ranked by seniority," but Cyprian seems to have exercised a sort of metropolitan authority. See Archbishop Benson in *Dict. of Christian Biogr.* i. 741.

[2] Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, ii. 569.

He at once assumed a leading position among the bishops and clergy of Northern Africa; but he did this with a tact which won the hearts of all except the little knot of his avowed opponents. Some even of these he gained over by gentleness. He always had his own way, but, like all the best rulers of men, he knew how to gain his end with the least amount of friction. On one occasion he tells his clergy that, being alone, he could give no answer to the question addressed to him by four of his "fellow-presbyters," "since," he says, "from the beginning of my episcopate I have determined to do nothing privately, on my own opinion, without your counsel and the consent of the people. But when, by the grace of God, I shall have come to you, we will deal in common with the things which either have been or are to be done."[1]

In his correspondence we have abundant illustration of his episcopal activity. He was actuated by the highest principles, but was somewhat masterful. It must however be remembered that we know in detail one portion only of his mind. We are little acquainted with his private thoughts, because all of his extant letters are of a public character.[2] He was one of those men who so completely merged himself in his office as to be able to preserve some sort of meekness in conjunction with a strong self-will, and to reconcile the belief that he was full of love with language of almost savage reprehension against some of his opponents. He appeals repeatedly to his willingness to overlook and endure the

[1] *Ep.* 14, sect. 5. I may here say at once that I have read Mr. Shepherd's letters to Dr. Maitland on the genuineness of the Cyprianic writings, which he gave me twenty-eight years ago at Trotter's Cliff. There can be no question that he raises difficulties which it is not easy to remove, but he fails to prove his main point.

[2] Dr. Pusey, *Pref. to the Epistles* (Oxf. Libr. of Fathers).

contempt of his authority, and declares that his humility is known and valued not only by the brethren but by the heathen. His only fear is lest he should have done harm by over-facility, and should become a delinquent by remitting delinquencies more readily than he ought.[1]

In his first letter he takes a line which seems somewhat extreme. A layman named Geminius Frater, who had recently died, had in his will appointed a presbyter Geminius Faustinus—probably a kinsman—the guardian of his children. This was contrary to the decision of a recent council of bishops. They had, as we think unwarrantably, taken upon themselves to forbid the nomination of any one connected with the ministry as guardian or executor, because the clergy "ought to devote themselves wholly to the altar and the sacrifices, and to have leisure for prayers." The text to which they appealed in defence of this interference with common obligations was 2 Tim. ii. 4, but that text (as indeed they admit) has no exclusive reference to the clergy, nor was it in any way intended to shut out either the clergy or the laity from the ordinary duties of family and social life. The appeal to the supposed example of the Levites is doubly unfortunate, both because it has no bearing on the special prohibition, and still more because—as Cyprian himself had shown in his *Testimonies against the Jews*—the old priesthood was for ever abrogated, and Christian ministers, except by a general metaphor, were presbyters, not priests. To pass such ordinances was not only to usurp a secular tyranny to which the bishops had no claim, but also to lead to that disastrous identification of the Christian ministry with the Jewish priesthood which has been

[1] See *Epp.* xvi. 2, lix. 22-28, lxvi. 2, etc.

fruitful of corruptions. Further, the ordinance could not but come with singularly bad grace from bishops of whom Cyprian tells us that not only were very many (*plurimi*) ignorant and heretical, but that many themselves combined their episcopal office with trade, agriculture, and usury![1]

Cyprian however wrote at once to tell the Church and people of Furni that he and his colleagues were deeply shocked by this incident, and that since Victor had "dared" to appoint the presbyter Faustinus the guardian of his orphaned children no oblation is to be made for him nor sacrifice on his falling asleep. He does not deserve to be named at the altar of God. An example is to be made of him to terrify any one else from disobeying the episcopal command.[2] It is impossible to read this letter without regret. It shows us the already ripening germ of those unscriptural developments which were to cleave between the clergy and the laity such a chasm of difference as has no foundation in the New Testament, and was entirely unknown to the primitive Church. It shows signs of the dangerous error which wholly separates the sacred and the secular instead of interpenetrating the secular with the sacred, and so leavening with divine influences the whole of daily life. It also indicates that already the Church was beginning to adopt those material and sensuous views of sacramental grace which landed her in "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."[3] And even after the adoption of these errors it was surely a

[1] *De Laps.* 6, *Ep.* lxv. 3, 6. Augustine speaks of the *saluberrima mordacitas* of Cyprian's remarks (*Ep. Parmen.* iii. 8). The date and place of the Council at which the decree was passed are not named. In the canons of the Fourth Council of Carthage (if genuine) clerks are allowed to earn their bread in trades or professions.

[2] *Ep.* i. 3. [3] Art. xxxi.

harsh punishment for an ecclesiastical offence to deprive a Christian of prayers and oblations which, if they meant anything at all, must have been believed to have an effect on his eternal welfare. Already, in this letter, we see the dark shadow of a tyrannous usurpation, we catch the earliest murmur of interdicts and anathemas. We may here however observe that Cyprian seems to confine the title "priest" (*sacerdos*) to the bishop, and to regard the presbyters as simple Levites. Of the great Christian truth of the universal priesthood of the laity, Cyprian has nothing effectual to say.

The second letter has more pleasing elements.[1] Euchratius, a neighbouring bishop, had written to ask the advice of Cyprian about an actor who on his conversion from Paganism had abandoned the stage, but, since he had no other means of earning a living, had taken up the business of training boys to be actors. It must be admitted that such a position was untenable. If the stage was one tenth part so corrupt as all contemporary authorities, Pagan as well as Christian, declared it to have been, no Christian could possibly be justified in training boys to take part in scenes which were often indecent and immoral. Cyprian of course, and without hesitation, gives this decision, but he adds that if the actor could not earn a living in any other way he should be assisted from the funds of the Church, and if the local Church was too poor to support him they might send him to Carthage, where sufficient should be given him for food and clothing.

The next letter, to Rogatianus, expresses the grief and indignation of Cyprian and his colleagues at the conduct of a troublesome and abusive deacon. They

[1] There is an unfortunate absence of dates in the whole Cyprianic correspondence.

advise his bishop to depose him if, after kind warning, he does not amend his ways.[1]

The next case of discipline is perfectly shocking. Again and again in Church history we are hideously confronted with the immoralities which arose from the exaltation of virgins and celibates as though they occupied *ipso facto* a position of pre-eminent holiness. A practice seems to have arisen of these consecrated virgins, these "brides of Christ," sharing the same rooms with deacons and other ecclesiastical persons.[2]

This criminal folly seems to have begun at Antioch, and certainly had it existed in the days of the Apologists they would have found it hard to refute the calumnies of the heathens.

It is difficult to imagine how a moment's toleration could have been anywhere accorded to a practice so certain to be prolific of the grossest hypocrisy and the vilest sin. Cyprian orders the offenders to be entirely and finally separated. The virgins were to be examined, and if it appeared that in spite of their asseverations they had "committed adultery against Christ," they were to do penance, and then to be readmitted into the Church, though whether as "virgins" or not does not appear. Cyprian evidently expects that this decision will be met with a certain amount of obstinate opposition, but his duty in the matter was plain; and he, like the Apostle, says that the virgins had far better marry than give occasion to such scandals as this. Strange that neither he nor any of the later Fathers saw that under the same conditions such scandals

[1] *Ep.* iii.

[2] Even as early as the Shepherd of Hermas (*Simil.* ix. c. 11) we seem to see a trace of this revolting freedom of conduct. See Dodwell's third dissertation *de συνεισάκτοις*.

were certain to recur, and certain to be multiplied.[1] Their dithyrambs in praise of celibacy were often a vulgar appeal to selfish interests—the escape from matrimonial troubles and the hope of loftier rank hereafter—and often a Manichean disparagement of nature. The current phrase a "bride of Christ" was itself, as applied to individual women, unscriptural and presumptuous. The bold metaphor was expanded by a multitude of writers from the third down to the sixteenth century into language which is profoundly unbecoming.[2] Celibacy—embraced from mixed and often turbid motives by whole classes of persons, including many who are wholly unfit for it—is a mechanical ideal of holiness which has not the smallest sanction in Scripture, and against which history and nature lift alike their warning voice.

Cyprian had already felt himself called upon to follow Tertullian—as he so often did—in a denunciation of the excesses and irregularities of these virgins in dress and other matters. In his tract "On the Dress of Virgins," he follows his master—though with less impetuosity and force—in recalling them to a sense of their obligations. His efforts were as fruitless as those of his predecessors. In the next century we find from Jerome that things were worse than ever, and that many of the virgins at Rome set a very bad example. Cyprian extols virginity as "the flower of the ecclesiastical seed, the glory and ornament of spiritual grace," and so forth—telling the virgins that they are the grains which bring forth sixty-fold as the martyrs do a hundredfold. He adopts towards them a tone of the utmost

[1] See the learned note in Dr. Pusey's transl. (*Oxford Libr. of the Fathers*, St. Cypr. i. 7).

[2] Even in this letter (c. 3) there is a most objectionable passage in which the anger of Christ against a virgin dedicated to Himself is compared to the jealous fury of a husband.

humility, and assures them that they already are what others hoped to be, having attained to the glory of the resurrection.[1] Yet he gives them strong warnings against vanity. Invoking nature itself, he somewhat feebly remarks that God did not make sheep purple or scarlet, and implies (after Tertullian) that the use of colours and jewels and pigments was revealed to womankind by the apostate angels. Cyprian cannot help remonstrating with them for attending marriage festivals, at which they witnessed unseemly rejoicings and listened to unseemly language; and for frequenting (strange to say) the public baths, which were used promiscuously by men and women. "*Sordidat lavatio ista non abluit.*" "In this way," he says, "the Church *frequently* has to bewail over her virgins, and groans over their infamous and execrable stories."

[1] *De Hab. Virg.* 3, 20-21.

VI

Continued

EPISCOPATE OF CYPRIAN

SECTION II

Cyprian was not destined to pass many years in the peaceful administration of his diocese. In the beginning of the year 250 the Decian persecution burst like a storm over the Church's peace. After the persecutions which disgraced the reign of M. Aurelius, the Christians had enjoyed peace under Commodus (180-192), Pertinax, and Didius Julianus. Septimius Severus during the greater part of his reign (193-211) had left them undisturbed, and was at one time kindly disposed towards them, though in 202 he passed the edict which forbade conversions and provoked the aggressive eloquence of Tertullian. Amid the internecine discord of Caracalla and Geta, persecution was relaxed. When Caracalla became sole Emperor, he was too much absorbed in mad follies to attend to the Christians,[1] and persecution was only fostered by isolated provincial governors like Scapula. The sole wish of the depraved Elagabalus (218-222) was to concentrate the emblems of every religion into his abominable sanctuary of the Sun.[2] Alexander Severus

[1] His nurse and his tutor had been Christians.

[2] Lampridius, *Heliog.* 3.

(222-235), aiming at a tolerant syncretism, placed the statues of Abraham and of Christ in his Lararium, and protected the Church.[1] Maximin (235-238), his brutal murderer, hated the Christians, if only because his predecessor had loved them.[2] He broke the calm which they had enjoyed with little interruption for more than thirty years, and his cruelties called forth Origen's Exhortation to Martyrdom. The Gordians (238-244) had no leisure for persecution. Philippus Arabs (243-249) was so favourable to Christians as to have originated a legend that he had been received into the Church as a penitent.[3] He and his wife Severa had once been in correspondence with Origen,[4] who however foresaw that the momentary gleam of prosperity would soon be extinguished.[5] He was succeeded by Decius (249-251), who, fired in imagination by the recent celebration of the Millenary games which had celebrated the thousand years' duration of Rome, strove to restore the glory of a crumbling empire by reviving the policy of Trajan.[6] He was scarcely secure upon the throne when he passed his terrible edict that all Christians were to be compelled to adopt the State religion, and to sacrifice to the gods. Hitherto the great mass of Christians, unless specially

[1] His mother, the Empress Mammaea, had conversed with Origen at Antioch. Lampridius says, "Christianos esse passus est."

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 28.

[3] Id. vi. 34. He only mentions it as a rumour (ὁ λόγος κατέχει). Jerome goes so far as to call him a Christian.

[4] Id. vi. 36. Comp. the letter which he quotes by Dionysius of Alexandria, vii. 10, 11.

[5] Orig. *c. Cels.* iii. 115.

[6] From the great secular games celebrated by Philip to the death of the Emperor Gallienus there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune. "During that calamitous period every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted by barbarous invaders and military tyrants, and the ruined empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution."—Gibbon, ch. x.

dragged into notice, had in the worst of times been practically ignored; henceforth they were to be sought out, and the proconsuls and local magistrates were commanded to take the initiative in suppressing them.[1] It was the first *general* persecution.[2] Cyprian tells us that its imminence had been revealed to him some time before its actual outbreak. He attributed it to the disunion of Christians. He says that in vision—for Cyprian attached as much importance to his dreams as Laud—he had seen the father of a family with two young sons on either side of him. On his right sat a youth with his cheek resting on his hand, and an expression of indignation and deep anxiety on his features. On his left stood the other youth, carrying in his hand a net which he seemed in act to throw, that he might catch the people who stood around. He wondered at the vision, and it was explained to him that the youth on the right was grieved because his precepts were disobeyed, and the one on the left exulted because he would now have permission to catch and to destroy.[3]

By this persecution Christians were tried as in the fire, and much dross was purged away from their community. Cyprian draws a terrible picture of the evils which a long peace had caused. He speaks of an insatiable desire for wealth among Christians, of crafty frauds, of deceitful language, mixed marriages, false oaths, of Christians speaking evil of one another with envenomed tongues. He speaks of neglectful ministers without

[1] Lactant. *De Mort. Persec.* 4. "Extitit post annos plurimos *execrabile* animal Decius qui vexaret ecclesiam." Gregory of Nyssa (*Vit. Greg. Thaumaturg.*) describes the extreme stringency of this decree.

[2] In this persecution died Pionius, presbyter of Smyrna; Maximus; Fabian, Bishop of Rome (A.D. 250); Alexander of Jerusalem; and Babylas of Antioch. Origen died from the effects of torture. The persecution continued in the reigns of Gallus (251-253) and Valerian (253-261).

[3] *Ep.* xi. 4.

mercy or discipline, of absentee and avaricious bishops, and of multiplied usuries—so that "many were conquered before the battle, prostrated before the attack." There was a widespread apostasy, especially of the rich and the prosperous. They did not even wait to be apprehended or questioned, but eagerly crowded to the tribunals as though they wished to seize the opportunity of denying their faith—even entreating the magistrates to keep the courts open that their defection might not be postponed for a single day.[1] They hastened to the demon-altars to immolate their hope, their faith, themselves, their own salvation—hurrying with them their wives and children, whom they compelled to apostatise. When a lady named Bona was dragged to the altar, and her husband, holding her hands, forced her into the semblance of sacrifice, she repeatedly exclaimed, "I have not done it; ye have done it."[2] These were called incense-offerers (*thurificati*) or "sacrificers" (*sacrificati*). Others, shrinking from this publicity of infamy, yet desiring to reap the same shameful benefit, purchased from the magistrates a declaration that they had sacrificed though they had not done so. These were known as "the certificated" (*libellatici*).[3] Others again, by means of a bribe, simply procured the enrolment of their names on the list of the apostates, and were known as the *acta facientes*. Had all Christians been like these, Christianity would have perished.[4]

[1] Cypr. *De Lapsis*, 8 (and see the letter of Dionysius of Alexandria in Euseb. vi. 41). In *Ep.* xxxi. 6, he says, "Nec hoc animentur quia *multi* sunt. . . . Nihil ad extenuationem delicti *numerus impudens* valere consuevit."

[2] Women who thus sacrificed under physical violence were called ἀέκουσαι, "unwilling."

[3] Those who gave up sacred books to the heathen (*traditores*) are first specified in the persecution of Diocletian.

[4] *Ep.* lv. 10-11.

But Christianity was saved by her host of the faithful. There were many of whom Cyprian could say, "Ye yielded not to punishments, but punishments yielded to you."[1] Tempted by hideous torments, by seductive blandishments, by the most heartrending appeals of natural affection, they did not shrink or waver. To the amazed perplexity of the heathen, "the tortured stood firmer than the torturers, and the beaten and mangled limbs conquered the beating and mangling *ungulae*."[2] At Rome, Fabian, the bishop who had been elected by the voice of the people, won the crown of martyrdom; and Alexander at Jerusalem. At Antioch, Babylas, murdered after having been forced to witness the execution of six of his youthful catechumens, bowed his head to the executioner with the words, "Behold I, and the children whom God hath given me." At Smyrna the bishop Eudaemon apostatised, but the shame of the Church was wiped away by the brave deaths of Pionius and his companions.[3]

Two great bishops—Dionysius of Alexandria and Cyprian of Carthage—though they were entirely faithful, and though they longed for the glory of death for the sake of Christ, held it their duty to retire for a time till the tyranny was overpassed. Polycarp had done the same before them, and Athanasius did so after them. It is from the letter of Dionysius, preserved by Eusebius,[4] and the letters and writings of Cyprian, that we get our

[1] *Ep.* x. 2. [2] Comp. *Ep. ad Diogn.* 6-7; Justin, *Dial.* 110.

[3] It is now generally admitted that the total number of the martyrs has been exaggerated. On this point the testimony of Origen (*c. Cels.* iii. 8) is surely decisive, Ὀλίγοι κατὰ καιροὺς καὶ σφοδρα εὐαρίθμητοι τεθνήκασι. It must be sorrowfully admitted that the Pagans never massacred *wholesale*, as Popes, Inquisitors, and Kings have done in the Netherlands, in Spain, and elsewhere.

[4] *H. E.* vi. 42. See too viii. 11 (et ibi Valesium).

fullest narratives of the persecution. At Alexandria, terrified by the unwonted spectacle of soldiers thirsting for their blood, multitudes fled into the mountains and the wilderness, and there perished of cold or famine. Many apostatised; many — and among them even boys and young children — were firm till death. The very executioners sometimes became converts. On one occasion a youth was beginning to succumb to the intensity of his agonies when some of the proconsul's soldiers encouraged him to endurance by their signs, and were themselves seized and put to death.

To defy the opinion about "flight in persecution," which had been so passionately urged by Tertullian,[1] to bear the reproach of cowardice, to hear at safe distance of the tortures and deaths of his heroic people, was to Cyprian a far deeper self-sacrifice than it would have been to come forward and die. Had he not retired he would have been the first to perish. More than once the heathens had burst into the stormy and ominous cry "*Cyprianum ad leones.*" He was well aware that his opponents would always cast in his teeth the charge that he had deserted his people.[2] His own view was that he had only obeyed the bitterest calls of duty by continuing to continue from his place of exile the work of a bishop. Very calmly, and in the fewest words, he furnished his people and the Church in general with his views on the subject. He wrote to his presbyters and deacons and to those of the Church of Rome that he had retired lest his presence should only add fury to the persecution; that

[1] *Ep.* xx. 1, "Cum me clamore violento frequenter populus flagitasset."

[2] Id. *ib.* "Comperi minus simpliciter et minus fideliter vobis renuntiari quae hic a nobis gesta sunt." See too *Epp.* viii. xvi. The Roman clergy acknowledge that Cyprian has acted rightly, "propterea quod sit persona insignis et imminente agone." This too was the opinion of Augustine, *Ep.* 228. See Valesius on Euseb. *H. E.* viii. 11.

though absent from his flock in the body, he had been present in the Lord; that he had written thirteen letters to comfort the strong, to encourage the weak, to discourage abuses caused by the letters of martyrs, to maintain the purity of discipline, to calm the minds of the wavering.[1] He said that he had only obeyed a divine intimation — perhaps in allusion to Matt. x. 23;[2] and that in a vision God had vouchsafed to him the message, "Tell him to be at ease, for peace will soon return."[3] His property, as he mentions incidentally in his reply to the contumelious Florentius, had been confiscated in his absence,[4] and his conscience entirely approved of what he had done. Among others, the presbyter Tertullus, in whom he placed the utmost confidence, had convinced him that his presence at Carthage would do more harm than good, and that he ought to keep away from a place where he had been so often sought for.[5] Even a faithful exile partook of the glory of confession. It was a glory which he entreats his brethren not to weaken by calumny, for every one confessed himself a Christian who did not within the appointed time deny it. "The first title of victory is to confess the Lord after having been seized by the hands of the heathen. The second grade of glory is by a prudent retirement to save oneself for the Lord. The one is a public, the other a private confession. The one conquers a secular judge; the other, content with God as his judge, keeps a pure conscience in the integrity of his heart. In the one case there is prompter fortitude, in the other a surer caution. The one, when his hour

[1] We still possess these letters.

[2] We have seen how Tertullian deals with this text, *De Fug.* 6. Augustine urges that John x. 22 should also be considered.

[3] *Ep.* xi. 6. [4] Id. lxvi. 4. [5] Id. xiv. 1.

draws near, has been found already ripe for death; the other has perhaps been postponed, who, having abandoned his patrimony, has retired for the very reason that he did not choose to recant, but would certainly confess if he too had been apprehended."[1] Such is the defence which Cyprian published without referring by name to his own case.

And there can be no question that by timely withdrawal he rendered to the Church a far higher service than he could have conferred on her by a precipitate martyrdom. It was anguish to him to hear how Fortunata, Fortunio, and many Christian men and women had been killed by famine in prison, and how Lucius and others were slowly dying of thirst and hunger; how Bassus had perished in a stone-quarry,[2] Mappalicus and Paulus under the torture; how Saturninus had been beaten by the *ungulae*,[3] and how many more had fled and lost their possessions. But he was in constant communication with all who were undergoing their "flowery" confession,[4] and sent repeated letters and messages to the presbyters, deacons, martyrs, and confessors. He tells the former that he will come to them whenever God shows him that it is His will. He entreats them to have a care for widows, the sick, the strangers, and all the poor. He has for this purpose left a sum of money in the hands of the presbyter Rogatianus, but fearing that it may have been all spent, he sends his acolyte Naricus with a new contribution. He is specially anxious that they should not give way amid the tempest of affliction. He writes with no less earnestness to the

[1] *De Laps.* 3, comp. 8. [2] *Ep.* xxii. 2, *leg. petrario.*

[3] The *ungulae* were claws of iron. Prudentius (*Peristeph.* i.) calls them *bisulcae.* Jer. *Ep.* i. 3, Cum lividas carnes ungula cruenta pulsaret.

[4] This curious euphemism was used for "a confession unto blood," *Ep.* xxi. In the Library of the Fathers it is translated "*empurpled* confession."

confessors and martyrs. He fortifies their courage, he extols their faithfulness; he urges all Christians to see that due honour is paid to their bodies when they are dead, and that every possible alleviation is afforded to them. In order that they may be duly supplied with food and clothing, he sends them, out of the small means which he had reserved for himself, first 250 sestertia, then another 250, and then 175 by the deacon Victor.[1] This would at least supplement the contributions generously furnished to them by the Christians of Carthage.[2]

Of the martyrs themselves—of the magnificent spectacle which they exhibited alike to God, to angels, and to men,—of the "lilies and roses" which they had added to the Church's crown — of her robe, "once white by their good works, now crimson with their blood,"— Cyprian writes with unbounded eulogy. He urges his clergy to take care that, as nothing is wanting to the glory of the confessors, so nothing may be wanting to their assistance, and he desires to be kept informed of the days of their deaths, "that oblations and sacrifices may be celebrated here by us for their commemorations." The wisdom of the panegyric which he heaps upon them may well be doubted. On the one hand there is a pathos and grandeur in true martyrdom which does not require the effusive praise of man, and on the other the tendency of these stilted laudations was to stimulate a flaring and false enthusiasm. Both at this time and in the persecution of Diocletian there were Christians who, oppressed by debt, by misery, and sometimes even by a sense of guilt, thrust themselves into the glory and

[1] A sestertium was then worth about £7 : 16s.

[2] *Ep.* xiii. sect. 5. Rigalt added this passage from one MS., and Baluz inserted it in his text.

imagined redemptiveness of the "baptism of blood."[1] It has been proved by myriads of instances that death is none so terrible that it cannot be faced unflinchingly even by the vilest of mankind. A man did not become a good man, much less a saint and hero, by showing the endurance and physical courage which made him refuse to abandon his faith for fear of the executioner. "Though I give my body to be burned," says St. Paul, "and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The extravagant estimate formed of the merits of all who were confessors became, almost immediately, the cause of grave scandals. We are horrified to read in Cyprian's letters that even in prison, even when death was imminent, there were some of the confessors who were puffed up into vanity and pride, and seemed to think that the blood of martyrdom would avail them to wash away the stains of flagrant and even recent immoralities.[2] Tertullian has given a description of the death of a "martyr" named Pristinus, which is so shocking in its grim satire that "it could not be matched with anything in Juvenal or Swift." Pristinus had been kept in "free custody," had gone to all the baths as something better than baptism, and all the haunts of luxury, and all the seductions of vice. The "Psychicals" (*i.e.* the Catholics) were afraid of his turning renegade at the last, and they drenched him with wine to such an extent that after being tickled with a few *ungulae* he was unable to answer to the presiding judge what lord he confessed; and after the torture, died under the hands of the executioner, with no capability of giving any

[1] Lavacrum sanguinis. When the deacon Saturus was first bitten by the wild beasts, the brutal mob shouted out, *Salvum lotum! Salvum lotum!* "Safe! washed!"—showing that they were aware of the Christian belief that martyrdom was as valid as baptism.

[2] *Ep.* xiv.

other answer except gurglings and hiccoughs.[1] "He is *your* martyr," says Tertullian, "not Christ's."

So perilous is it at all times to place any form or degree of outward service on a higher level of holiness than that which can alone be attained by holy living! "I grieve," says Cyprian; "when I hear that some of the confessors run to and fro in an immoral and overbearing manner; that they give themselves up to fooleries and quarrels; that the members of Christ, and which have already confessed Christ, are stained by illicit connections, and that they cannot be ruled by deacons and presbyters, but act in such a way that, owing to the corrupt and evil morals of a few, the honourable glory of many is tarnished. For he is in the end a true and glorious confessor for whom the Church does not afterwards blush, but boast."[2] Again, in another letter he says, "But I hear that some cast a stain upon your number, and by their corrupt conversation destroy the praise of your pre-eminent name; whom you ought yourselves, as lovers and protectors of your own honour, to rebuke, repress, and amend. For how does the misconduct disgrace your name when one of you spends his time in drunkenness and lasciviousness, and another returns into the land whence he had been banished, that he may be arrested and put to death—no longer as a Christian but as a criminal. I hear that some are inflated and puffed up, whereas it is written, 'Be not high-minded but fear.'" And he again complains, with the deepest grief and anguish, of the infamous and promiscuous concubinages, which set so shocking an example, and of contentions, emulations, railings, revilings—even of those who have looked death in the face.[3]

[1] Tert. *De Jejun.* 12. [2] *Ep.* xiv. [3] Id. xiii. 2, 3, 4.

These sad and disgraceful incidents were but the beginning of troubles which lasted for many years. During the persecution Christians had apostatised by thousands, and especially Christians of wealth and rank; and as the confessors—with little reference apparently to their previous or actual character—were exalted to the highest pinnacle of sainthood, so the lapsed were thrust down into the lowest abyss of scorn, and treated as though they had capitulated to the demons. These unhappy apostates not only had to suffer the anguish inflicted by their own conscience, but were expelled from the communion of the Church until after due penance they had been formally re-admitted. By this time the doctrine "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" was understood in its narrowest sense, and the desire to be restored to the Christian community was intensified in the minds of the ignorant by the magical efficacy which they attached to the elements of the Lord's Supper. Many of them, when persecution ceased, were impatient to be entitled once more to the name and the privileges of Christians, without waiting for the slow and painful processes of Church discipline. Now this was only possible by one means. The martyrs, who had rendered to Christianity the service of an immense self-sacrifice, had acquired a sort of prescriptive and almost unchallenged right to give "letters of peace" to the lapsed, which practically served the purpose of absolution, and gave them a claim to be received into communion with their unfallen brethren.[1] Tertullian in his tract "To the Martyrs" had recognised this privilege, though after

[1] *De Pudic.* 22, *ad Mart.* i. On these *libelli pacis* see Bingham, xvi. 3, sect. 4. Clearly, if there were martyrs and confessors so grossly unworthy and even criminal as Tertullian and Cyprian declare, the notion of their right to procure pardon for others was a profanation.

he became a Montanist he declared plainly that neither martyrs nor bishops had any right to pronounce absolution for mortal sins. "Let it suffice a martyr," he said, "to have purged his own sins. Can the light of one man's puny lamp suffice for another too?"

Now the confessors and martyrs of Carthage were so misled by the position to which they were elevated, and to which Cyprian himself contributed to elevate them, that they displayed in this matter a most reprehensible laxity. They made the path of apostasy easy by giving their "letters of peace" indiscriminately, unconditionally, and without any inquiry. The confessors and martyrs at Rome showed greater wisdom and caution, so that the easily-obtained intercession of the Carthaginian prisoners was in great request. A certain Celerinus at Rome had four sisters, on whose behalf he writes to a Carthaginian confessor named Lucian. One had sacrificed, and for her he says he prays and weeps in sackcloth and ashes day by day. Two others of his sisters, Numerica and Candida, had also failed to stand the test, but they had shown such conspicuous merit by the kindness which they had extended to Carthaginian fugitives in Rome, that Celerinus hopes for their forgiveness from Christ, at the request of His martyrs, in accordance with their own penitence and good works. A fourth sister, Etecusa, had not sacrificed, but having gone as far as the statues of the "Three Fates" in the Forum on the road to the Capitol, had turned back and purchased an exemption.[1] The clergy at Rome had examined their case, but as their bishop, Fabian, had been martyred, they had declined to re-admit them to communion until a new bishop should be elected. Celerinus therefore, who himself had taken part in a

[1] The reading here is uncertain.

"flowery confession," writes to entreat Lucian and the Carthaginian martyrs to forgive the sin of his sisters.[1]

The reply of Lucian, written in a style which shows him to have been an uneducated man, is as follows. While the blessed martyr Paulus was yet in the body he had called Lucian to him and said, "Lucian, before Christ, I say to thee, that if after my departure any one asks peace of you, give it in my name." Hence all the Carthaginian martyrs had agreed to send peace to all who asked for it, and not only the four sisters of Celerinus, but all other women in a like case might claim this "peace" when they had stated their case to the bishop and made public confession. The letter was written amid hunger, thirst, and smoke in a small dungeon; many of the writer's companions had already been tortured and slain. He sends greeting by name to many of the Carthaginian confessors at Rome, "and all whose names I have not written, because I am now weary, therefore they must pardon me."

So sweeping an exercise of an honorary privilege might well be deprecated. Cyprian saw the danger. He had already written to the martyrs and confessors to warn them how unfitting it was that "*thousands* of certificates should *daily* be granted contrary to the law of the Gospel without any distinction or inquiry into individual cases, and had expressed his disapprobation of the manner in which the lapsed tried to corrupt the martyrs into concessions by fawning and flattery, by importunate and fulsome entreaties."[2] To the clergy of the Church of Rome he wrote to say that "the brother

[1] *Ep.* xxi. This letter and the reply to it are all the more interesting from having been evidently written by such unaccustomed pens. But what prevented Celerinus from giving such a letter himself to his sisters? He too was "empurpled."

[2] Id. xx.

Lucian was indeed a man glowing in faith and strong in virtue, but very ignorant of Scripture, and had constituted himself an authority among the inexperienced vulgar, so that his autograph certificates were distributed wholesale (*gregatim*) to many in the name of Paulus.[1] The martyr Mappalicus had shown more modesty. Mindful of law and discipline, he had given no certificates of peace except to his own mother out of motives of affection.[2] Saturninus had been tortured and was still in prison awaiting death, but he had not given one such letter. Lucian, on the other hand, had scattered such documents, written in his own handwriting, far and wide, even while Paulus lived, and after his death continued to do so on the plea that Paulus had commanded him, "not knowing that he ought to obey the Lord rather than his fellow-servant." Lucian had also written many such documents in the name of the youth Aurelius who had endured torture, and who did not know how to write.[3]

The scandal was certainly flagrant, and it led to serious consequences. So far from paying any attention to the warnings of Cyprian that they ought to act in a less irregular and extravagant manner, the confessors, headed by Lucian, wrote a reply which must almost be called insolent in its curt peremptoriness, and which would have put an end to all discipline or fear of God. It ran thus—

"*All the Confessors to Cyprian, Pope.*[4]

"Please to know that we have given peace to all whose conduct has been satisfactory to you since the

[1] The phrase is surely hyperbolical.

[2] His martyrdom is described in *Ep.* x. Amid his torments he cried out to the proconsul, "*Videbis cras agonem.*" He died of the torture (Id. xxii.)

[3] Id. xxvii. 1. [4] Id. xxiii.

commission of their crime, and we wish that this decision be made known through you to the other bishops. We wish you to have peace with the holy martyrs. Written by Lucian in the presence of two clerical witnesses, a reader and an exorcist."

Of such a letter Cyprian justly complains. The saving clause, "*de quibus ratio constiterit*," only rendered the position of the bishops more invidious, seeing that it gave them no choice as to the forgiveness of the lapsed, but only as to their subsequent behaviour. It compelled them, after careful trial of individual cases, to deny to many that which *all* now boasted that they had received from the martyrs and confessors. Seditions had in consequence arisen in many provinces. Menacing crowds had gathered round the presiding clergy, and had extorted from them by threats and terror the immediate concession of the "peace," which, as they repeatedly exclaimed, had been already granted them by the martyrs.[1] Some turbulent ringleaders had forced themselves even into Cyprian's house, and "set on fire by this letter of Lucian as though by torches," had furiously tried to extort the peace which (they said) had been given them. Another bishop, Caldonius, had been perplexed by the same questions, and had written to Cyprian for advice, saying, "The necessity of these dangerous times demands that we should not confer peace rashly." Cyprian entirely agreed with him, and he sent these letters, together with those of Celerinus and Lucian, to

[1] How very high the feelings on the subject ran is shown by the Damasine epitaph of Bishop Eusebius discovered in the catacombs by De Rossi. The Heraclius referred to was perhaps one who took the same line as Montanus or Novatian.

Heraclius vetuit lapsos peccata dolere,
Eusebius docuit miseros sua crimina flere,
Scinditur in partes populus, gliscente furore,
Seditio, bellum, caedes, discordia, lites.

the clergy at Rome, contrasting the modest humility of Celerinus with the ignorant disorderliness of Lucian. "The martyrs," he says, "do not make the Gospel, but are made martyrs by the Gospel."

But what rendered the position of Cyprian far more trying amid these assaults on his person, his authority, and the whole system of Church discipline, was the fact that there was a coalition between the confessors and some of his own presbyters. These were Donatus, Fortunatus, Novatus, and Gordius, to whom he had already said that he could not answer their letter without consulting with the clergy and laity. He had to struggle against a torrent of odium with all the strength of faith.[1]

He remained firm as a rock. He did not adopt the Montanist conviction of Tertullian that mortal sin could never be condoned, but he was strongly opposed to the lax discipline and facile pardon which had been introduced by Zephyrinus and Callistus. He demanded proof of penitence before he would re-admit the lapsed, but he did not hesitate to pardon them when he was satisfied on this head. If we take his expressions literally, he seems to have too much identified Church absolution with divine pardon. In his book *On the Lapsed*, he says that no man can forgive sins, but God only; but in common with most Christians of his age, he was too ready to assume that he possessed a delegated power to do *more* than declare God's forgiveness on the hypothesis that the repentance shown was genuine. He is indeed forced to admit that absolution may be given to the unworthy, and is in that case invalid; it would have been difficult, therefore, to deny the converse of the proposition,— that absolution might be refused to the

[1] *Ep.* xxvii. 4.

deserving.[1] Amid this controversy we look in vain for the consoling word which should have said to the lapsed, "The main point in your case is the necessity for sincere repentance. If you have been and are sincerely penitent for your fall, it may still be needful that you bear such penalty as may help to strengthen the conviction that your sin is heinous, but you may then be assured that no accident of your bishop's absence, or of your sudden death, can cut you off from God's forgiveness." Cyprian claimed that it was the exclusive right of bishops to absolve. The history of later ages showed how terribly the claim to possess this power might be abused; but he was in the right when he resisted the idle notion that the certificate of a martyr who had been flattered by shameless importunity could be valid to restore renegades to Church communion "without discrimination and without enquiry."

He had to deal with the claims and clamours of three classes—the lapsed, the confessors, and his own disaffected presbyters.

1. He reminded the lapsed of the heinousness of their guilt, and of the plain duty of patience and repentance. He claimed a right by the promise given to Peter to bind and loose as Peter's episcopal successor in the government of the Church. He is astonished, therefore, that any should have dared to write to him—the bishop—in the name of the Church, as though the Church were a number of the lapsed, and not the bishop, the clergy, and people. God is not the God of the dead but of the living; let not the lapsed, therefore, presume to

[1] Jerome fully admits this, *Com. in Matt.* l. iii. c. 16, "Istum locum episcopi et presbyteri non intelligentes, aliquid sibi de Pharisaeorum assumunt supercilio . . . quum apud Deum *non sententia sacerdotum sed rerum veritas* quaeratur."

regard themselves as the Church. Others, however, had written to him in modesty and humility, and though they had received a certificate from the martyrs, had felt that it could be of no avail unless ratified by himself, and had therefore professed their willingness humbly to await his return to Carthage, and his decision in their favour. With these he is greatly pleased, but he tells them that they must each sign their names to their own certificate, in order that he may be able to consider their cases severally, and write back to them as best he could "in the mediocrity of his place and line of conduct."[1] Cyprian could not but see that this alone would be an act of penitence, since it thus became necessary for the lapsed to come out of the multitude, and acknowledge with their own hands their individual crime. They could not make Cyprian's absence a fair ground of complaint, seeing that the ordinary period for penitents lasted three years.

2. He treats the martyrs and confessors with great respect. He addresses them in conciliatory and deprecatory language as "most valiant and most beloved brethren," but he urges them not to yield to unreasonable demands, and not to put their bishop under the necessity of resisting their wishes. They could not wish him to do anything which was not agreeable to the will of God. They were actuated doubtless by motives of compassion, but were they more merciful than the Divine Mercy? He justly complains that some of them had given their "letters of peace" in the form, "Let such a one *and his friends* be admitted to communion." So "uncertain and blind a petition" served no purpose but to heap odium on their bishop; for it gave an excuse for thirty or more persons to come in a body and

[1] *Ep.* xxxiii.

to demand re-admission into communion on the plea that they were all kinsmen, friends, or domestics of him who had received the letter. Surely the martyrs themselves could hardly have failed to see that this at any rate was a monstrous abuse.[1]

3. With the disaffected presbyters he is far more indignant. He can no longer keep patience with them. It is they who by their rashness, their immoderate and reckless presumption, have disturbed the peace of the Church, imperilled the spiritual welfare of the lapsed, and set the modesty of martyrs in conflict with the dignity of the bishop, whom they have treated with contumely and contempt. They "entangle the glorious servants of God with the priest of God," and show much less reverence to his office than the martyrs themselves have done. The latter he might have passed over, and have borne it as he had done, were it not that the conduct of these caballers had both led the martyrs into irregularities and tended to make the lapsed think less penitently of their crime. He is strengthened in his determination, he says, by visions of the night, and by the inspired utterances of young and innocent boys who saw and heard divine intimations in a trance. It is singular to find Cyprian appealing to dreams and Montanistic ecstasies. It was a very dangerous appeal to make, and one which might easily be turned against him.[2] He tells his clergy, however, that when God grants him

[1] *Ep.* xv.

[2] In the case of the Montanists the champions of the Church had rejected and condemned the notion of this supernatural passivity in receiving divine intimations. But—

> That in the captain's but a choleric word
> Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy—

we see often enough that the theological offence consists not in the thing said but in the person who says it.

the privilege of returning to his Church, as God had commanded him to retire from it for a time, he will bring to open trial—before the clergy, the laity, and the confessors themselves—the rash, reckless, and arrogant presbyters who neither fear God nor regard man.[1] Meanwhile he suspends them from their clerical functions. In another letter he praises his clergy for refusing their communion to the presbyter Gaius of Didda and his deacon who, in spite of warning, had persisted in communicating with the lapsed. He refers the case of two subdeacons and an acolyte—"who withdrew in the middle of the persecution and have now come back"—to the time of his return, when the whole laity and clergy can consider it. For many of the clergy, "even thus late," have not thought it right to return. These offenders, he says, are not to receive their monthly dividend.[2] But meanwhile summer was coming on, deaths during the unhealthy season of the year were likely to be numerous, and Cyprian felt that his premature return might only precipitate a schism. The lapsed might complain that their salvation was imperilled by their bishop's obstinacy, since he insisted on refusing their re-admission until he had inquired into each case. Besides this, he could not but see that his clergy were in a sullen mood, for though he wrote to them frequently they returned no answer.[3] He felt that *some* concession should be made, and he wrote to give permission that, in cases of imminent death, the lapsed, after confession

[1] *Ep.* xvi.

[2] Id. xxxiv. I do not understand in what respect the conduct of these persons, "qui medio tempore recesserunt et nunc venerunt," differed materially from Cyprian's own; nor how he could censure the clergy for not returning to their work "*vel sero*" when he himself had not done so; unless indeed he supposed that in his own case he was justified by the visions and divine intimations to which he appeals.

[3] Id. xviii.

and penitence, might be re-admitted into peace in the presence of a presbyter, or, in his absence, of a deacon. Even this concession did not satisfy his opponents. Although many who had been banished and their goods confiscated had not yet been able to return, these apostates were demanding restitution to all Christian privileges. But at this point Cyprian stood firm. The persecution was not yet over. They might, if they chose, even at this eleventh hour, testify their sincerity. If not, their case was the case "not of a few, nor of one Church, nor of one province, but of the whole world, and they must await from God's protection the public peace of the whole Church."

Meanwhile Cyprian was daily endeavouring to strengthen his own cause. He added to the number of the clergy some who had been confessors. Celerinus, who had spent nineteen days in chains and prison in hunger and thirst, was made a reader. The young Aurelius, who had been twice a confessor, before the local magistrates and before the proconsul, was also made for the present a reader. The ordination could not, under the circumstances, be so regular as Cyprian desired, since it was not possible for him to consult the clergy and the people. Numidicus, who had already been a presbyter in some other Church, was, in obedience to a divine warning, transferred to the Carthaginian presbyterate. His story was a strange one. He had exhorted a large number of his Christian brethren to endure martyrdom by fire and stoning, and, without flinching in his joyous enthusiasm, had seen his wife burnt to death as she clung to his side. He himself, half burnt and overwhelmed with stones, had been left for dead. His daughter, when she came to recover his corpse, found him still breathing, dragged him out of

the heap of martyrs, and called him back to life. Doubtless, said Cyprian, he had been preserved for the very purpose of being added to the Carthaginian clergy, and so adorning with a glorious reinforcement the community which the lapse of some presbyters had left desolate.[1] Cyprian, earlier in the year 250, had made Saturus a reader and the confessor Optatus a subdeacon.[2] He apologises for having taken this step by observing that these two had been marked out by common consent for the clerical dignity, and he had only hastened their actual ordination because he required two of the clergy to take his letter to Rome, and none of the few existing clergy could be spared.

Thus by statesmanlike prudence Cyprian strengthened his cause in all directions. The provincial bishops were with him. He could now rely on a considerable number of presbyters. By his tact he had won over the most earnest and respected of the confessors; above all, he had secured the approval of the martyrs, confessors, and clergy of Rome. At first indeed the latter had been inclined to take a high hand and to assume a right of spiritual direction over his flock. In the lost letter in which they had announced the martyrdom of Fabian, they seem to have done more than hint their disapproval of Cyprian's retirement.[3] When however he had explained his motives, and proved to them, by sending copies of all his letters, how active a superintendence he had exercised over his Church, they had directed their presbyter Novatian to write in their name, and express their entire approval of his conduct.[4] In the matter of the martyrs' certificates, which they go so far as to call

[1] *Ep.* xl. [2] Id. xxix. [3] See Id. ix. xx.

[4] That Novatian, who was an able writer, was the author of this letter appears from *Ep.* lv. 4. "*Novatiano* tum scribente."

"nefarious" and ruinous to discipline, they coincide heart and soul with the views of Cyprian.[1] Discipline, they say, is the only rudder by which the ship of the Church can be steered amid the storm. The fact that they address Cyprian as "most blessed and glorious Pope," shows how entirely they lent him their valuable support. The Roman confessors also wrote to him with approval, blaming the precipitancy of their Carthaginian brethren.[2] Cyprian wrote back to them his warm acknowledgments, and sent their letters to his own clergy.[3]

And yet with his utmost efforts he was unable to prevent a schism. Towards the close of A.D. 250 he sent a special commission to Carthage, consisting of the Bishops Caldonius and Herculanus and the presbyters Rogatianus and Numidicus, to assist the poorer brethren, to put them once more in the way of earning their living, and to report generally about their condition, since out of their number were appointed the minor officials of the Church. The commission was highly displeasing to the opposition party of Cyprian's presbyters. They felt that these two strange bishops and one newly-appointed presbyter were practically coming among them to "spy out the land" and to report the names of the disaffected. To the deacons it was still more distasteful, for hitherto Cyprian had made *them* his almoners, as indeed they naturally were. So deep was the indignation that the deacon Felicissimus publicly put his veto on the proceedings of the commission, and threatened that none of those who furthered its operations should communicate with him

[1] *Ep.* xxx. 3. "Qui se ipsos infideles illicita nefariorum libellorum professione prodiderant." The letter is also published among the works of Novatian (Gallandi, iii. 321). [2] Id. xxxi. 8. [3] Id. xxxii.

"in the mount."[1] The commission therefore practically failed.

When Cyprian heard the news he was deeply grieved, and wrote to the Commissioners a vehement letter in which he denounced Felicissimus for his present "wicked and treacherous course of action" in thus separating the sheep from their pastors, the spiritual sons from their father, and scattering asunder the members of Christ. He bids them tell Felicissimus, and Augendus who had abetted him, that in refusing to communicate with the Commissioners they practically pronounced the sentence of their own excommunication. And in point of fact the Commissioners publicly announced that they had withdrawn from the communion of Felicissimus, Repostus, one of the exiles, Sophronius, Soliassus the *budinarius*,[2] and two women, Irene of the empurpled,[3] and Paula the seamstress.

But Felicissimus was only the satellite of Novatus, and it was the latter who, with four other malcontents,[4] instigated his factious conduct. They thus practically pretended not only to be *a part* of the Carthaginian Church, but *to be* the Carthaginian Church, and to extrude from it their bishop and those who acted with him. If we are surprised at such audacity we must

[1] *Ep.* xli. What the expression means is quite uncertain. Two MSS. read "in morte" for "in monte" (see Rettberg, pp. 99, 100). It may mean the place called Mons, where Felicissimus as deacon distributed his relief funds.

[2] *Ep.* xlii. What *budinarius* means is unknown. Salmasius suggests the reading *bretinarius*, maker of cruets (Sophocles s.v. *βοῦττις*); the Oxford editors read *burdomarius*, "a mule-carrier."

[3] Irene *Rutilorum, i.e.* of those who were reddened with their own blood (comp. *florida*).

[4] Donatus, Gordius, Fortunatus, whom they afterwards elected as their schismatical bishop, and one who is unnamed. Novatus is charged with having ordained Felicissimus illegally, and without Cyprian's knowledge.

remember that their hands were strengthened by the support of "thousands" of the lapsed, who perhaps formed a considerable majority of the community, and who in the agony of their conscience were ready to catch at any straw. In Felicissimus and the five presbyters they saw the champions of their own cause, who, they believed, would be more ready than their bishop to restore them to the privileges which their cowardice had flung away.

The most painful part of the resultant controversy is the fact that no sooner did these men head the opposition than they cease to be "dearest brothers," and the most tremendous charges of moral depravity are hurled against them. Of these charges we have had no previous hint. They were members, and prominent members, of the Carthaginian clergy, and hitherto Cyprian has neither removed them nor uttered against them any such grave accusations. Now he writes to tell his Commissioners that Felicissimus has been guilty of frauds and rapines, of which he has distinct evidence, and is also a detected adulterer, on which charges he intended to bring him to trial. In a later letter to Pope Cornelius he describes him as a man of foul and execrable life, "guilty of every crime," who had embezzled money—a seducer, a devastator and corrupter of many wedded unions—and one who has only made himself the head of a schism in order to escape further investigation.[1] In a letter to the laity he says that Felicissimus has corrupted the minds of the confessors against the priesthood of God, stirred them up to pride and disorderliness, and deceived the lapsed to their destruction. Of Novatus it is difficult to think well. He seems to have been a man of faction and party, for

[1] *Ep.* xli. lix. 1.

whereas in Carthage he opposed Cyprian and constituted himself the champion of the lapsed, at Rome he took the exactly opposite line and joined the intolerant party of Novatian. Yet even for him it might be pleaded that he had but changed from laxity to stringency, as Cyprian himself changed to some extent from stringency to laxity. Perhaps the treatment of the lapsed was with him a secondary matter, and he was only anxious to maintain the independence of the presbyterate. At any rate it is hard to believe that he could have been so monstrous a criminal as Cyprian paints. He tells Cornelius that Novatus is "always desirous of sedition, raging mad with the rapacity of an insatiable avarice, inflated with the arrogance and infatuation of a haughty conceit, condemned by the voice of all priests as always a heretic and a traitor, inquisitive in order to betray, a flatterer in order to deceive, never to be trusted, a torch and fire to kindle the conflagrations of sedition, a whirlwind and tempest to cause the shipwrecks of faith, an adversary of quiet, a foe to tranquillity, an enemy of peace." He adds that he has robbed wards, cheated widows, embezzled Church funds, allowed his father to die of starvation in the streets and afterwards declined to bury him, and kicked his wife in such a way as to cause the death of her child.[1] "And now he dares to condemn the hands of the sacrificers when he is himself more guilty with his feet, by which his unborn son was slain!" He too has fomented the schism to escape judgment.[2] Can we believe these frightful denunciations, or are they the mere froth and venom of theological hatred and party denunciation? If not what

[1] Married presbyters cannot have been uncommon in the Church of Carthage. We have already met with the cases of Caecilius and Numidicus.

[2] *Ep.* lii. 3.

are we to make of the fact that such men as Felicissimus and Novatus, who if the charges against them were true were unfit even to be Christian laymen, played a leading part in two such Churches as those of Carthage and Rome? How is it that hitherto Cyprian has not had a word of censure for this Nero, this parricide among his presbyters? Similar accusations of manifold criminality and insatiable wickedness are hurled at Nicostratus the deacon, the Bishop Evaristus, Privatus, Bishop of Lambesa, two other bishops, Jovinus and Maximus, and indeed every supporter of the schism. Must the plea of charity be hushed at once before these unsupported assertions?[1] Or was it the opposition to the views of their bishop which had suddenly transformed them into monsters of iniquity? The libels are unproved, and it is safest to attach to them much the same value as we usually attach to the measureless invectives of religious hatred. The charges are of the exact type which were invariably, or almost invariably, hurled by the orthodox against all heretics and schismatics, even against men so innocent as Montanus and Marcion. If we are to accept even one tenth part of what bishops and priests said about each other in those days, truly the white robe of the Church must by this time have contracted many a deep stain, and "the glory of her orange flower" have faded utterly away!

On every ground the schism of Felicissimus caused to Cyprian the deepest grief, and among other things it delayed his return to Carthage. By the spring of 251 the Decian persecution was at an end. The unhappy

[1] Mosheim, *Comment.* p. 501, was the first even to suggest the possibility that Felicissimus and Novatus may not have been so black as they are painted.

Emperor had gone to meet his fate on the battlefield, fighting against the Goths. By the strange irony of history Philippus Arabs had celebrated the proud millenary of Rome with the bloody games of the amphitheatre only four years before a Roman Emperor for the first time perished in disastrous conflict with barbarians! The persecution had been a failure. Decius had injured Christianity, but had not destroyed it. Multitudes of Christians had purchased their lives by different degrees of apostasy, and the corrupt officials of the Empire preferred the pleasure of bribes even to the pleasure of butchery; but on the other hand the heroism of the martyrs had proved that Christianity could never be suppressed until every true Christian had been exterminated from the earth.

Cyprian might have returned before the Easter of 251. He complains to his people that though he had now been absent two years from them,[1] the malignity and perfidy of some of his presbyters rendered it so certain that his return would be the signal for a tumult, that he was compelled to postpone his arrival until after Easter. By that time he hoped that his hands would be strengthened by a council of the bishops of the province, who would take the pressing questions of the day into their immediate consideration.

Meanwhile he utilized his remaining leisure by writing his tract "About the Lapsed." In this book he states the opinions with which his various letters have already made us familiar. The only distinctive part of this little treatise is the group of seven miraculous stories by which he excites their terror. One man, after denying Christ in the capitol, had been stricken dumb.

[1] *Ep.* xliii. 4, Exsilium jam biennii. This is a round number for less than a year and a half, or about fourteen months.—Rettberg, p. 112.

A woman, who after her apostasy had gone straight to the baths, had there been seized by an unclean spirit, and had lacerated her tongue with her teeth. Another case had come under his personal cognisance. A father and mother, flying from the persecution, had left their infant daughter in the care of a nurse, who had taken the child to the heathen altar. As she was too young to eat any part of the sacrifice, they had put into her mouth a piece of bread steeped in wine. Afterwards the mother took her to the Holy Communion, and "while we were sacrificing" the child first began to wail and then fell into violent agitation. When the deacon came round with the chalice she turned away from it, and when the deacon poured some of the consecrated wine into her mouth she was seized with spasms and vomiting.[1] A woman who had secretly thrust herself among the communicants was seized with convulsions. Another, attempting with unworthy hands to open her trunk in which was "the holy thing of the Lord," was terrified away by fire bursting from it.[2] A man who had sacrificed to idols tried to eat a part of "the holy thing of the Lord," but on opening his hand found it only full of ashes![3] Superstition must indeed have been rampant among the Carthaginian Christians if such unsubstantiated prodigies were commonly believed.

Cyprian does not relate to us any of the incidents of his return. We only know that in 251 he presided at a council held at Carthage, which took into considera-

[1] Infant communion continued to be the custom for some centuries (Suid. s. v. *σύναξις*; Bingham, xv. 4, sect. 7). It was abolished by the Council of Trent.

[2] Reservation of consecrated elements by private persons had by this time arisen, and it continued till the eighth century. Bingham, xv. 4, sect. 13.

[3] *De Lapsis*, 24-26.

tion the two questions of the schism of Felicissimus and the re-admission of the lapsed.[1]

On the latter question the council leaned to larger concessions. They decided that the *libellatici*, as less guilty than the *sacrificati*, should, on declaring their penitence, be at once received back into communion. The *sacrificati*, lest they should be driven to despair, were to be admitted to "peace" on their deathbeds, even if they had no certificates from martyrs or confessors; and this "peace" was to be valid even if they recovered. The clergy, however, who had lapsed were to be degraded to lay communion. The moderates, who inclined to lenience, carried the day; and they were much strengthened by what had taken place in Rome. There, after a severe struggle between the milder party of Cornelius and the more stringent party of Novatian, Cornelius had been elected Pope on June 4, 250. This showed that the majority in the Roman Church desired that the path of the lapsed should now be smoothed as far as possible. The question of strict discipline was modified by the question of what had become necessary in the interests of the Church. Cyprian was a practical man, and under the twofold influence of the North African bishops and the Church of Rome he modified the rigorism of his earlier view, and wrote a long letter to Antonianus[2] to defend himself from the charge of levity in changing his mind. In point of fact his abstract opinion remained unchanged, but he had yielded

[1] Seven councils seem to have been held during the brief episcopate of Cyprian. 1. One in A.D. 251 (*Ep.* 57). 2. One in A.D. 252, which addresses Fidus about a bishop who admits the lapsed (*Ep.* 64). 3. One in Easter 252, about the lapsed (*Ep.* 56). 4. One on the case of the Spanish bishops Basilides and Martial (v. *supra*, *Ep.* 67). 5. The one on the invalidity of heretical baptism (*Ep.* 70). 6. Also on re-baptism (*Ep.* 72). 7. On the same subject, Sept. 1, A.D. 256.

[2] *Ep.* lv.

to the authority of the council, supported as it was by the example of the Roman Church. The change of times demanded a change of policy. Justice should be tempered with mercy. His main point had been gained. The lapsed were not to be promiscuously restored to Church unity because they could show the scratch of a martyr's pen. Except *in articulo mortis* they were only to be pardoned after a lengthened period of penitence. So far the hierarchical party had won the day against the confessors and the presbyters. A new persecution was perhaps imminent,[1] and the lapsed should be armed for braver battle. They had been taught to feel the gravity of their offence, and the love of the Church, which could be both stern and tender in due season.[2]

When the Council turned to the question of the schism, Felicissimus and his adherents were summoned to answer for their conduct. They had lost the powerful support of the lapsed, who had now been brought back to their allegiance by wise clemency. The schismatics were condemned, and Novatus immediately made his way to Rome and joined the Novatians, who had appointed a bishop of their own sect in Carthage.

Felicissimus did not bow to the decision of the Council. He was joined by Privatus, Bishop of Lambesa, who had previously been deposed for heresy, and who, with four other lapsed bishops,[3] now consecrated Fortunatus as a rival Bishop of Carthage. Thereupon Felicissimus sailed to Rome with letters from his party, "carrying his own storm." The letters were full of complaints against Cyprian—denying the validity of his

[1] *Ep.* lvii. 1. "Sed enim cum videamus diem rursus alterius infestationis appropinquare coepisse."

[2] See Brownlow and Northcote, *Roma Sotteranea*, p. 171, who give the previously-quoted inscription on the tomb of St. Eusebius.

[3] Felix, Jovinus, Maximus, Repostus.

episcopate, and making the false statement that twenty-five bishops had concurred in the consecration of Fortunatus. He threatened Cornelius that if he did not take his charges against Cyprian into consideration, he would have them published in some other way. Cornelius was alarmed, and especially because he had not heard at the same time from Cyprian, whose emissary, the deacon Felician, had not been despatched in any great haste, and had been detained by contrary winds. Cyprian indeed says that he had thought the whole matter scarcely worthy of his notice.[1] On Felician's arrival the Pope at once dismissed the adherents of the rival bishop. There were now three nominal Bishops of Carthage, of whom Maximus represented the Novatian extreme of rigour and Fortunatus the extreme of laxity. But Cyprian felt himself so unassailable that in one of his emotional outbursts of eloquence he reproaches Cornelius for having wavered. He ought not to have given a moment's countenance to Felicissimus and his "council of desperates," whose "immodest and incestuous contagion ought not to violate the chaste spouse of Christ." If bishops are to yield to threats and to be terrified by violence, there is an end to all episcopal authority. Not to speak of the Jews and the Pagans, "it does not matter from *what* source terror and peril come to a bishop, who lives exposed to terrors and perils, and yet derives his glory from them. It is no ignominy to us to suffer from our brethren what Christ suffered; nor is it any glory to them to do what Judas did. Their abuse, with which they daily lacerate themselves and their own life, we do not fear; the clubs and stones and swords of which they boast in parricidal words we do not shudder at. Such men, as far as in them lies,

[1] *Ep.* lix. ii. "Quando haec omnia contemnantur a nobis."

are homicides before God. Yet slay us they cannot, unless God permit. We shall have to die once, but they by their hatred and their misdoings are daily perishing. But, my brother, ecclesiastical discipline must not be abandoned nor priestly censure relaxed, because we are assailed with abuse or shaken with terrors." Then, after quoting some twenty passages of Scripture bearing on this subject, he says, "But—for I speak under provocation, I speak in grief, I speak by compulsion—when a bishop is elected into the place of one who has died; when he is chosen in peace by the suffrages of a whole people; when he is protected in persecution by the help of God, faithfully united to all his colleagues, approved to his people in an episcopate which has now lasted for four years, attending to discipline in times of quietness, proscribed in the storm, so often demanded for the lion in the circus, in the amphitheatre, honoured by the testimony of his Lord's esteem, once more demanded for the lion by the shout of the multitudes in the circus on these very days in which I am now writing to you, because of the sacrifices which the people were bidden to offer by a public edict;[1] when such a man, dearest brother, seems to be impugned by a few desperate, abandoned, and excommunicated persons, it is clear *who* impugns him; certainly not Christ, who either appoints priests or protects them, but he who, being the adversary of Christ and the enemy of His Church, persecutes with his hostility the man who is placed over Christ's Church in order that when the steersman has been removed he may make his assaults with the more violence around the shipwrecks of the Church." There, and throughout the whole indignant letter—in which he again charges

[1] An edict of Gallus (251-254) bidding all his subjects to sacrifice to the gods, perhaps because of a prevalent drought.

his opponents with conspiracies, adulteries, apostasy, and crimes of every hue — speaks Cyprian the bishop and Cyprian the man![1]

After this we hear no more of the miserable schism of Felicissimus. Novatian, aided by the intrigues of the Carthaginian Novatus, was irregularly consecrated Bishop of Rome by three strange bishops, who were grossly ignorant, and were—so Cornelius tells Fabian of Antioch —intoxicated when they performed the consecration![2] Novatian charged Cornelius with being a *libellaticus*, and one who communicated with apostates. Novatian had been the most eminent and eloquent Roman presbyter during the persecution, though he had not been converted till mature age, and had only received clinical baptism without subsequent confirmation.[3] He was one of the few theologians whom the Roman Church had as yet produced, and he had even received the title of ὁ δογματιστής. He adopted the severest views about the lapsed, and his party—who were in the East called καθαροί (Puritans)—led the Church while the bishopric was vacant. He was charged with being actuated by disappointed ambition; and Cornelius, in writing to the Eastern Bishops, called him "a deceitful, cunning, and savage beast." He seems, however, to have been a man of austere and blameless character, though he was doubtless hurt when the milder section of the clergy, aided by the lapsed, elected the laxer and hitherto

[1] *Ep.* lix. It is interesting to learn that in 1844, when De Rossi discovered the tomb of Pope Cornelius, there were four painted figures, of which three were Cornelius, Cyprian, and Sixtus II. See *Roma Sotterranea*, pp. 176-181.

[2] *Ap.* Euseb. vi. 43.

[3] His enemies said that he had once been a demoniac; that his ordination by Fabian was against the wishes of all; and that in the persecution he had shrunk from his duties, saying "that he was attached to a different philosophy." The latter charge must be founded on misapprehension.

unknown Cornelius.[1] He probably yielded to over-persuasion in allowing his own consecration. In vain did Cornelius offer fair terms of reconciliation. In vain did the gentle Dionysius send a letter to the Romans by the hands of Hippolytus. The unfortunate schism did not finally die away till the sixth century.

Novatian had rendered Cyprian a great service by supporting him against the coalition of presbyters and confessors during the Decian persecution. He sent his delegates to announce that he had been consecrated as a rival to Cornelius, against whom they brought grave charges which they offered publicly to prove. But though they were turbulent and indefatigable, Cyprian refused to hear them, and rebuked them sharply for their schism. In his letter to Antonianus he says that he had never troubled himself to inquire what were the specialities of Novatian's doctrine. "Whoever he is, and whatever he is, he is not a Christian who is not in the Church of Christ."[2] We see that Cyprian had absorbed the argument of Tertullian's tract "On the Praescriptions of the Heretics." He affirms the same proposition, yet more formally and emphatically, in his tract "On the Unity of the Church," which was written about this time. It was but an occasional pamphlet, written to win back the Novatian confessors from their schism, but it has exercised an immense and long-continued influence. Yet his rule is entirely empirical. By the unity of the Church Cyprian meant the agreement of the bishops.[3] The definition of the true Church

[1] Novatian's extant writings are in Migne, *Patr. Lat.* iii. 861-970. "The see of Rome," says Cardinal Newman, "possessed no great mind in the whole period of persecution" (*Apolog.* 407).

[2] *Ep.* lv. 20.

[3] Cardinal Newman says—"The oneness here spoken of is, according to Roman Catholics, fulfilled in the organisation of the whole Church; whereas, according to Anglo-Catholics, it is fulfilled in each bishopric."

of Christ must after all and always depend, not on any visible unity, not on any episcopal consent or numerical majority of those who agree in certain views, but on the possession of the truth. As Lacordaire says, "Where Christ is, there is the Church;" where Christ is, there is the essential truth; where the truth is—were it but in the breast of a single martyr whom corrupt Churches unite to excommunicate and crucify—there is the only Catholicity which God esteems. "He can no longer have God for a Father," says Cyprian,[1] "who has not the Church for a mother." Perfectly true, if by the Church you mean the elect people of God when they possess the truth on some essential matter in dispute; but absolutely untrue if you apply the phrase to some existing visible Church, however splendid its power, however apparent its unity, respecting which the voice of God Himself is crying aloud, "Come out of her, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers in her sins." "As the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred," says our Article XIX., "so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith." Yet, according to the arguments of Tertullian and Cyprian—though not according to their practice when the theory came to the test of action—a person differing from the Church of his locality and its bishops, or from the Church of his times speaking by the voice of its representatives, would be *ipso facto* a self-condemned heretic, and could have no salvation! When bishops and councils condemned Athanasius did he cease to be in the Church? When "the world groaned and wondered to find itself Arian," after the Council of Rimini, did all but the Eusebians become heretics? When the combined representatives

[1] *De Unit. Eccl.* 4.

of the Church in its visible unity and Episcopal government degraded Savonarola from the communion of Rome, did they degrade him from the communion of the Church of Christ? When the Church burnt Huss was it sufficient to say, "You are not in the Church, therefore you are no Christian?" When the Council of Constance ordered the ashes of Wyclif to be scattered to the winds, did it prove that he had been for ever damned? Christ has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" and many of the martyrs who were burnt in the name of Catholicity at Smithfield or Toledo were incomparably truer Christians than those who burnt them. Occasions may even arise, as in time past they have arisen—alike in the old dispensation and in the new—in which communion with bishops may mean alienation from the communion of saints; in which popularity with the vast majority of priests may mean participation in corruption; in which communion with the visible Church—with all except the small and unknown few who have not bowed the knee to Baal—may be nothing less than apostasy from Christ.

Cyprian had fought a great fight, and on the whole had won a great victory. On every important question which then filled the field of controversy he had been mainly in the right. Naturally, however, he had not satisfied all by finally adopting a middle course between the extreme views of the rigorist Novatian and the lax Felicissimus.

A certain confessor of Novatian opinions, named Florentius Pupianus, had written him a letter which must have caused him some pain. He seems to have addressed it "To Cyprian, who is also Thascius." What shade of reprobation he implied by this singular mode of

address we do not know, but Cyprian replied "To Florentius, who is also Pupianus." Cyprian wrote back that he had hoped to hear that Florentius had repented of believing or repeating such shameless charges as those to which he had alluded. Florentius had expressed a fear lest the lustre of his own confessorship should be impaired by communication with Cyprian, who replies that it is faithlessness against God to believe "that those who are ordained are unworthy or impure, for this is equivalent to believing that it is neither by God nor through God that His priests are appointed in the Church." A strange remark! Had Cyprian himself hesitated to pronounce that Novatus and Privatus and others were monsters of iniquity, priests and bishops though they were? Is it not true, as Hilary said, that the ears of the people are sometimes purer than the heart of the priests? How amazing, too, is the tacit assumption that if Cyprian had been so unworthy a bishop as Florentius supposed, the large numbers of believers under his rule had departed "without hope of salvation and peace," and that "no grace of baptism and of the Holy Spirit" could have been conferred by his ministry![1] It would be deplorable indeed if the grace of God were so confined to human channels that the unworthiness of the ministers hindered the effect of the sacraments.[2]

Florentius had rebuked him for pride; he answers that his humility is notorious to all, and was once known and loved by Florentius himself. He retorts the charge of pride upon his correspondent, martyr though

[1] *Ep.* lxvi. 4.

[2] Such an assumption is in direct opposition to all Augustine's arguments against the Donatists. C. *Ep. Parmen.* ii. 11, sec. 25; iii. 5, sec. 26. *De Unit. Eccl.* 4, etc. It is the Puritan notion that "the minister is of the substance of the sacrament." Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. lxi. 5.

he was. In rejecting Cyprian he is rejecting Christ. Ants have their king, cattle their leader, bandits their chief, and is he to reject a divinely-appointed superior?[1] "You have indeed said that a scruple on which you have fallen must be removed from your mind. You have fallen on a scruple, but by your irreligious credulity; you have fallen on it, but by your sacrilegious mind, while you lend a ready ear and facile credence to impure, impious, and monstrous calumnies against a brother, against a priest, and defend alien lies as though they were your own." How is it that the martyrs, and so many bishops my colleagues, and my flock, and the confessors, widows, virgins, and all Churches throughout the whole world have not fallen on any such scruple? Is Pupianus the only pure, perfect, inviolate saint? and will he dwell alone in Paradise and in the kingdom of Heaven? You charge me with having broken up the unity of the Church. The Church is at this moment completely at one. The bishop is in the Church, and the Church in the bishop, and if any one is not with the bishop he is not with the Church." He proceeds to tell Florentius a revelation which he had himself received to the effect that "he who does not believe Christ when He makes a bishop will begin to believe Him hereafter when He avenges a bishop."[2] "You have my letter and I yours. In the day of judgment, before the tribunal of Christ, both will be read aloud."[3]

[1] Comp. *Ep.* lxiii. 1. "Cum mediocritatem nostram semper humili et verecundâ moderatione teneamus."

[2] Cyprian is quite aware that Florentius may attach no great importance to his visions, but he attributes this to moral obliquity. "Although I am aware that to some persons dreams appear ridiculous and visions trifling, yet assuredly it is to such as rather believe against bishops than believe the bishop."

[3] See *Ep.* lxvi. 6.

It is easy to see that the position of a bishop in the fourth century was far from being a bed of roses; but Cyprian must have found some consolation from his conviction of its exalted dignity. His identification of the Church with the bishop is one of those sweeping generalisations which are at once reduced to absurdity by the test of fact. It amounts to the monstrous assertion that every bishop is infallible. Gregory of Nazianzus found that even whole assemblies of them were not, and laid down the rule *πάντα σύλλογον φεύγειν ἐπισκόπων.*[1] Cyprian's language on the abstract duty of agreeing with your bishop is unintelligible. Duty may require the very opposite. There had been hundreds of instances of bishops quite as secure on their thrones, quite as beloved by their flocks, appointed by suffrages even more unanimous, who were yet absolute heretics. What would Cyprian have said if any one, holding his own views on the supernatural exaltation of episcopacy, had pleaded his own arguments as a valid reason for siding with a heretical bishop or a heretical diocese? Augustine, and, under other circumstances, Cyprian himself, argued that to communicate with an erring bishop is to partake of a bishop's errors.[2]

But herein Cyprian is the true representative of Latin theology. The Latins could not understand a spiritual Church, bound together only by the invisible presence of Christ—"a school for learners under an invisible instruction." Visibility, rigidity of formulae, uniformity of practice and opinions, stringent and repressive discipline, supernatural importance of ecclesiastical offices, obedience to and unity with bishops as successors of the Apostles, endowed with definable miraculous grace by manual transmission,—this was their

[1] See too Aug. *De Bapt.* ii. 3. [2] *Ep.* lxvii. 3.

narrow and untenable conception of the notes of the Church. They insisted on an established order, a central authority, a supreme dominion, exclusive power to admit to or shut out from the favour of God, the existence of a sacred caste by divine right, a Jewish and Levitic priesthood, offering Jewish and material sacrifices — in a word, the whole theory of sacerdotalism, with its accompanying magnification of forms and ritual. The Latin Fathers, and Cyprian as their coryphaeus, failed to conceive of a spiritual Church coextensive with all who love their Lord in sincerity and truth. The only legitimate and logical conclusion of such theories is Papal autocracy. It is to Greek theology that we must turn if we would find a fuller recognition of the freedom of conscience and the freedom of grace, and the truth that "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The laws of the Spirit, as of the wind, are more unknown and unseen than Cyprian dreamed. He divideth to every man severally as He will. Whatever Cyprian or other ecclesiastics meant when they said "No salvation outside the Church," must be supplemented by the words of St. Peter, "that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him"; and by the words of our Lord Himself, "that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

VI

Continued

LAST DAYS OF CYPRIAN

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."—Rev. ii. 10.

SECTION III

The trials of Cyprian did not end with the Decian persecution. "Gallus, the son of Decius," wrote Dionysius of Alexandria, "was undeterred by the fate of his father."[1] The Carthaginian Christians were indeed left unmolested by Gallus, but in Rome Cornelius was banished to Centumcellae (Civita Vecchia),[2] and Lucius was martyred on March 5, 253.

Cyprian was constantly expecting a new and yet more violent outbreak of persecution in Africa. He wrote to support the courage of the Church at Thibaris, and also composed his *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. It is written on the unsatisfactory model of his *Testimonies against the Jews*, and consists of brief theses supported by passages of Scripture, which are often used in senses entirely apart from their true significance.

From the trial of execution he was for the present

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 1.

[2] He is sometimes called a martyr, as by Cyprian (*Epp.* 61, 67), and on his tomb in the Catacombs. But the term is perhaps general.

spared; but in A.D. 252 a new and unexpected calamity burst over Africa, and overwhelmed heathen and Christian alike in a common misery. This was a terrible visitation of the pestilence, which "raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family of the Roman Empire from 250 to 265."[1] It called forth Cyprian's tract "De Mortalitate." He here endeavours to wean his people from all love of life by a very pessimistic picture of its trials, miseries, and temptations, which he contrasts with the glorious blessings which death will confer on them. He removes the idle dread with which some of them vexed themselves that the plague would rob them of the glory of death by martyrdom. He combats their tendency to murmur that Christians as well as Pagans were involved in these natural misfortunes. He urges on them all the duty of learning in the midst of affliction the need for greater purity and faithfulness in the performance of their duties to God and man. Nor did he confine himself to writing. An incidental allusion shows that he was constantly in his pulpit endeavouring to stimulate and to console, in obedience, he says, to a divine revelation.[2]

But the universal wretchedness called forth his noblest activity. While the heathen were only confirmed in their selfishness, while they seemed to give themselves up to an absorbing terror which made them abandon their dearest relatives and leave the dead unburied in the streets; while they looked on their peril with all the wrath and anguish of despair, the

[1] Gibbon. See *De Mortal.* 9, where there is a terrible description of its nature. Comp. Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 22; Greg. Nyss. *Orat. de Greg. Thaumat. ad fin.*

[2] *De Mortal.* 20. "Nobis revelatum est ut contestarer assidue et publice praedicarem." In sect. 19 he relates the vision of a priest who was rebuked for fear of death.

Christians were unbroken by the storm and broke its force.[1] Cyprian did not content himself with exhortations; he organised a great ministry of help. All the Christians who could contribute any money cheerfully gave of their substance to assist the suffering. Those who were too poor to subscribe to the relief fund gave the yet more precious boon of their personal services. The most beautiful feature of their charity lay in the fact that it was purely human, and was extended as much to the Pagans as to their own Christian brethren. And their benevolence was not without its good effect, though some Pagans still raised the cuckoo-cry that the disasters which were afflicting mankind—the defeats and murders of Emperors, the threats of barbarians, the visitations of nature—were all due to the atheism and impiety of the Christians.[2] Among these slanderers was the philosopher and magistrate Demetrianus. To him Cyprian addresses an easy refutation. He feels indeed the uselessness of his task, and says that

> One might as well go stand upon the shore
> And bid the main flood 'bate his usual height

as try to stem the flood of these habitual calumnies.[3] He does little more than echo the original thoughts and powerful rhetoric of Tertullian, whom he imitates and almost exaggerates even in his least estimable passages.[4] The tones in which he addresses Demetrian himself are little marked by the severe dignity and "sweet reasonableness" which would have been more effective.

[1] Vit. Cypr. 10. Cyprian gives a frightful description of the state of things in his *De Mortal.* 14-16.

[2] Comp. Tert. *Apol.* 40, *ad Nat.* i. 9; Euseb. *H. E.* ix. 7; Origen, *c. Cels.* iii. 15. The charge is met by Arnobius, Augustine, Ambrose, and others.

[3] *Ad Demetr.* 1. "Facilius esse et levius turbulenti maris concitos fluctus clamoribus retundere quam tuam rabiem tractatibus coercere."

[4] Compare, for instance, *ad Demetr.* 24 with Tert. *De Spect.* 29.

"Frequently," so he begins, "had I despised you, Demetrianus, as you barked against the only true God with your sacrilegious mouth, and clamoured against Him with impious words. I regarded it as the better and more modest course to scorn the ignorance of an errorist by my silence, than to provoke a madman's insanity by my speech." Of such a style, so common in the writings of ecclesiastics, we can only say that it is fatally easy, and far from commendable. One of Cyprian's arguments is a curious sign of the times. He asks what Demetrianus could expect in a world that was growing old and falling into such obvious decay, that its former qualities and capacities were now entirely exhausted? War, sterility, famine, disease, pestilence, drought, barbarian inroads, were partly a proof that God was angry with the obduracy of the heathen, but partly a natural result of the world's senescence and decrepitude, now that the day of judgment was near at hand. Such passages show that amid the universal decadence even Christians had caught something of that spirit of morbid pessimism which had long characterised their heathen contemporaries.

The pestilence was attended by its usual fearful concomitants of drought and famine, and besides this there were hordes of barbarous Numidians who hung on the borders of the Empire and made incursions, in which they succeeded in carrying away a multitude of captives. To ransom some at least of these was a fresh duty which fell on the Christian brotherhood. The Numidian bishops made their pitiful appeal to Cyprian, and he collected no less than 110,000 sestertia (more than £800), which he had the pleasure of forwarding to them as the contribution of his clergy and people.[1] By

[1] *Ep.* lxii. 3.

these happy services his thoughts were naturally turned to "good works and alms." About this time (A.D. 254) he wrote a pamphlet on that subject. It made a strong impression, and doubtless produced good results. It contains one striking passage, in which he contrasts the self-sacrificing energy of men in the service of the great deadly enemy the devil with their supine slothfulness in the service of Him who died for them.[1] Yet the grounds on which he bases the duty of beneficence are by no means so pure and spiritual as those which we learn from the Gospel. They rather resemble the views of the books of Tobit and Ecclesiasticus. He dwells far too much on the meritoriousness of good works, far too little on the self-rewarding delight of unselfish and uncalculating love.[2] His least guarded expressions are charitably defended and explained in our Homily on alms and deeds. He also wrote a little exposition of the Lord's Prayer, in which, as usual, he mainly follows the thoughts, and sometimes borrows the actual expressions of Tertullian, whom yet, strange to say, he never names in a single letter or a single work.

By this time Cyprian's moral influence was widely felt. Impressed with the natural ascendency of his character, the bishops, not of Africa only, but of many neighbouring countries, looked up to him as their leader and sought his advice. He never attempted to domineer over them, but when he was consulted he did not shrink from the incisive expression of a strong opinion. In the Decian persecution Fortunatian Bishop of Assurae had been one of those who lapsed, and the Church

[1] He boldly introduces Satan challenging Christ to show such faithful votaries as his. *De op. et el.* 22. Tuos tales munerarios Christe demonstra.

[2] *De operis et el.* 5. "Magisteria divina docuerunt *operationibus bonis Deo satisfieri, misericordiae meritis peccata purgari.*"

elected Epictetus in his place. At the close of the persecution Fortunatian, assisted by many of those who had lapsed with him, wished to resume his functions. Epictetus and his adherents appealed to Cyprian for advice, and he (A.D. 254) wrote in the strongest terms to declare that Fortunatian had forfeited all claim to be regarded as a bishop.[1] Similar cases had occurred in Spain, where two bishops—Basilides of Astorga and Martialis of Merida—had become *libellatici*, and been also guilty of grave offences. The stricter members of the Churches had therefore thrown off their allegiance and elected new bishops Felix and Secundus. Basilides at once sailed to Rome and enlisted in his favour the assistance of Stephen, who had succeeded Lucius in the Popedom (May 12, 254). Stephen, either because he lived at a distance[2] and had been deceived, or because he shared with his predecessor Callistus the notion that a bishop could not under any circumstances be deposed,[3] supported the criminous bishops. Cyprian quietly sweeps aside the judgment of "his colleague," as he calls Stephen, and declares for Felix and Sabinus. Nothing can be clearer than his unconsciousness of any infallibility in the Bishop of Rome, or of any right on his part to dictate to other Churches. He interprets the promise of Christ to Peter as applicable to all the Apostles, and therefore to all bishops, who, in his opinion, had exclusively inherited their apostolical authority.

Another appeal came to him from Faustinus and the Church of Lyons. Martianus, Bishop of Arles, was a Novatian, and had renounced the communion of his

[1] *Ep.* lxv.

[2] *Ep.* lxvii. 6. "Romam pergens, Stephanum collegam nostrum longe positum, et gestae rei ac veritatis ignarum fefellit."

[3] As we learn from the *Philosophumena* of Hippolytus.

brother-bishops, because they seemed to him to be too lax towards the lapsed. The Gallic bishops appealed to Stephen, who, so far as we know, took no notice of their appeal. They then applied to Cyprian. He did not think it right to interfere directly, since Rome was far more nearly concerned than he was with the affairs of Gaul. He did not hesitate, however, to address Stephen, telling him in the plainest terms that it was his duty[1] to write at once to the bishops of Gaul, bidding them to depose the haughty Martianus and elect another in his place.

Thus then, on two occasions, Cyprian had come into collision with the arrogance or neglect of the Bishop of Rome. His third controversy with Stephen assumed wider proportions. It rose, like so many other serious difficulties, out of the case of the lapsed. In former days Pope Victor had assumed the right to lay down the law to the Churches of Asia in the Paschal dispute, and had been met by the dignified rebuke of Irenaeus. Following in his footsteps, Stephen attempted to assert the same supremacy. The Novatianists rebaptized those who came to them from the Catholics, declaring that the baptism of men so lax as to hold communion with *sacrificati* and *libellatici* must be invalid. This opened the whole question of rebaptism. When a heretic was converted, the Roman Church regarded his previous baptism as valid, and admitted him into its membership by simple confirmation or laying on of hands. In the Churches of Asia, on the other hand, heretical baptism was ignored, and no one was received into the Church without a fresh baptism, as had been decided by synods at Iconium and

[1] *Ep.* lxviii. 2. "Quapropter *facere te oportet* plenissimas literas ad coepiscopos nostros," etc.

Synnada. This was also the custom of the North African Churches. It had been supported by Tertullian in a lost Greek tract, and had been ratified in a synod under Agrippinus, Bishop of Carthage. Such being the state of the case, Stephen, with inexcusable self-assertion, had written to Firmilian, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and to the bishops of Asia Minor, separating them from his communion because they rebaptized heretics. This was in A.D. 254, and a synod of thirty-one bishops met at Carthage to decide against Stephen, by declaring that heretics *must* be rebaptized. Cyprian's first direct intervention in the question was called forth by the letter of Quintus, a Mauretanian bishop, who had asked his opinion. Cyprian, quoting Ecclus. xxxi. 30, declared that Catholic rebaptism was not *rebaptism* at all, but the only real baptism.[1] In this letter he glanced at Stephen without mentioning his name; but in 255 another African synod of seventy-one bishops again unanimously decided against the Roman custom, and in forwarding the acts of this synod, Cyprian addressed Stephen as an equal, and tried to reason him out of what he regarded as his mistake. Stephen, however, though he behaved with unreasonable asperity and rashness, was theoretically in the right. The Church has followed him in his conviction that any baptism performed in the name of the Holy Trinity should be regarded as valid. It was to his credit, and to that of the Church of Rome, that they rose above the narrow and intolerant ecclesiasticism of the Bishop of Carthage, and formed a more spiritual conception of what Holy Baptism is and means. But though the Pope had the better cause, he managed it in the worse manner. He refused to see Cyprian's delegates and (to the indigna-

[1] *Ep.* lxxi.

tion of Firmilian) did not hesitate to call him "a false Christian, a false Apostle, and a deceitful worker." Such language was discreditable, though it must be admitted that Cyprian had spoken in a manner which was certain to cause the deepest irritation.[1]

Yet Cyprian rendered a real service to the Church when he asserted the absolute independence of other Churches, and their right to resist the usurping encroachments of the Roman see. In this he was ably supported by Firmilian, who, in a long letter to Cyprian (A.D. 256) says, "I am justly indignant at this so open and manifest folly of Stephen, who thus glories about the place of his episcopate, and maintains that he holds the succession of Peter."[2] He denounces in no measured terms the audacity, insolence, and cruelty of the Bishop of Rome, whom he compares to Judas. In September 256 Cyprian summoned yet another synod of eighty-five North African bishops, who, with the concurrence of many presbyters, deacons, and laymen, unanimously decided to disregard the menaces of Rome and to maintain the North African tradition. Some had previously entertained doubts, like Jubajan, a Numidian bishop, who was staggered by the adoption of a Novatian practice;[3] but they now assented to Cyprian's opinion, and formed a closer union with the Asiatic bishops, who held that in excommunicating them Stephen simply excommunicated himself.[4] At this crisis Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria,

[1] See *Ep.* lxix. 10, etc.

[2] *Ep.* lxxv. 17. The letter shows Cyprian's style, but it is clear that he himself translated it from Firmilian's Greek, which in some cases he imperfectly understood.

[3] Cyprian combats this scruple in a letter to Jubajan, *Ep.* lxxiii. The close of this letter shows at its best the "jucunditas fraterni amoris, tanta dulcedo caritatis" which St Augustine praises, *De Bapt.* v. 17.

[4] Archbishop Benson remarks that "the unanimity of such early

showed once more his exquisite and pacific genius. He wrote kindly letters to Stephen and to his successor Sixtus, exhorting them to forbearance and brotherly love, and as he inclined to their view of the matter, his interposition must have been powerful for good.[1] Nevertheless, Stephen remained obstinate. This rent in the Church's unity might have assumed formidable proportions had not the Valerian persecution and the deaths of Stephen (August 2, 257) and Cyprian brought it to a close. Sixtus II., Stephen's successor, whom Pontius calls "a good and pacific priest," wisely left each Church to follow its own tradition. The Council of Arles rejected the opinion of Cyprian. The Church of Africa silently and gradually adopted the views of the Church of Rome, and, a century and a half later, another great African bishop, Augustine, in his argument against the Donatists set aside the authority of the earlier synods and refuted the arguments which the Donatists borrowed from them.[2] The moods engendered by this controversy probably suggested to Cyprian the subjects of his two tracts "On the Blessing of Patience" and "On Jealousy and Envy" (A.D. 256). He shows tolerance and self-control in avoiding every direct allusion to the current controversies.

The end was now near at hand. Gallus and his son had been murdered in February 254 by their own soldiers, and in April 254 the senate had summoned to the

councils and their erroneousness are remarkable." "The conclusion reached by such an assembly (of bishops), uncharitable, unscriptural, uncatholic, and unanimous."

[1] Euseb. vii. 4, 5, 7. Tillemont, iv. 142, 143.

[2] The Councils of Arles (A.D. 314) and Nice (A.D. 325) admitted the validity of all baptisms administered in the name of the Holy Trinity. The Council of Trent (March 3, 1547), anathematises the defence of rebaptism; and the Greek Church also repudiates it.

throne the Censor Valerian. At first he was so entirely favourable to the Christians that Dionysius calls his palace "a church of God."[1] After a time, however, he fell completely under the influence of a certain Macrianus, who is said to have been a high priest of the Egyptian Magi, and who seduced the Emperor into all kinds of sorcery.[2] In those days the position of a Roman Emperor was little short of desperate. In whatever direction he turned his eyes the horizon was black with storm and menace. Emperor after Emperor had been defeated or murdered. At home there were plagues and civil wars; in the west were the Franks, in the north the Goths, in the east the Persians under their redoubtable Sapor—all burning with hostility, and flushed with the insolent sense of superior force. Valerian turned to the Pagan magic of an impostor with all the desperateness of a man at bay, and Macrianus soon persuaded him that his sorceries were only rendered unavailing by the anger of the gods against the Christians who insulted them.

Accordingly Valerian, in A.D. 257, published an edict that Christian bishops were to be banished and Christian assemblies forbidden.[3] On August 30 Cyprian was summoned before the Proconsul Aspasius Paternus, and asked what he had to say to this edict, which required his submission to the State religion. "I am a Christian," answered Cyprian, "and only recognise the one true God." "Are you obstinate in this determination?"

[1] *Ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 10.

[2] "The administration of Valerian was distinguished by a levity and inconsistency ill-suited to the gravity of a *Roman Censor*."—Gibbon, xvi.

[3] Dionysius of Alexandria (*ap.* Euseb. vii. 10) describes Valerian as "a mouth speaking great things," with "power to continue forty and two months" (Rev. xiii. 5). At the end of three and a half years' reign Valerian was taken captive by Sapor.

Cyprian answered that such a conviction could never be altered. He was therefore banished to Curubis (Kurbi), about forty miles from Carthage, but refused, even on grounds of Roman law, to become a *delator* by answering the Proconsul's question as to the names of his presbyters. His deacon Pontius voluntarily accompanied him to his place of exile. It was a pleasant spot, and Cyprian was treated with respect and consideration by all the inhabitants. As he was a man of rank, wealth, and distinction, the imperial authorities dealt with him in a far less brutal and summary manner than they did with the ordinary multitude of the Numidian clergy and laity. These were cruelly handled, without the least regard to age and sex. They were imprisoned, they were sent to work in the mines, they were beaten, they were clad in contumelious prison costumes; their heads were half-shaved, they were loaded with fetters, they were forced to lie on the hard ground in the agonies of cold and hunger.[1] All of them, from the bishops down to young boys of the laity, looked up to Cyprian for counsel and consolation, and not in vain. He aided them alike with his contributions and his encouragement,[2] and they wrote in terms of hearty affection to express to him their warmest thanks for the aid which his subdeacon and acolytes had brought them.[3] But Cyprian knew that his time was short. On September 14, 257, he saw the dream which assured

[1] *Ep.* lxxvi. 2.

[2] See *Ep.* lxxvi., which is addressed to his fellow-bishops, fellow-presbyters, and deacons, and other brethren—martyrs of God—who had been condemned to the mines. To use his own metaphor, "he sent them a vest made of the wool of the Divine Lamb, dyed purple with His blood," *De Exhort. Mart.* 3.

[3] *Epp.* lxxvii. lxxviii. lxxix. The third letter is addressed, "Cypriano carissimo et delectissimo."

him of martyrdom, and on September 14, 258, the dream was fulfilled. He dreamed that a tall youth led him before the Proconsul, over whose shoulder the youth looked as he entered something in his tablets. The youth was troubled by the entry, and, looking at Cyprian, imitated with his hand the stroke of a headsman. Cyprian begged for one day's delay, and the youth made him a sign that the Proconsul had granted his request. He interpreted the one day to mean the respite of a year. Indeed in those times he might well consider that God had long spared him, for during the eleven years of his episcopate he survived five bishops of Rome — Fabian, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephen, and Sixtus II., of whom it is possible that four were martyrs.

A year passed, and Galerius Maximus succeeded Aspasius Paternus as Proconsul. Rumours reached Cyprian of a still more stringent edict, and, sending to Carthage to inquire, he heard that Valerian had now decreed that all the Christian leaders, and all persons of rank who had embraced Christianity, were to be degraded from their offices, to forfeit their possessions, and, if they still remained firm, to be beheaded. Cyprian had already informed his people that he never again intended to withdraw from persecution. Although his conscience entirely acquitted him either of timidity or faithlessness for having obeyed (as he believed) a divine intimation in flying to another city during the Decian outbreak, he had suffered so deeply in every way from the misconstruction of his motives on that occasion that he determined never again to avoid his fate. He was only awaiting the arrival of the second edict, which would, he hoped, bring to him the joy and glory of the martyr's crown. Sixtus II. of Rome, after only a year's epis-

copate, was decapitated as he sat in his episcopal chair in the catacomb of Praetextatus on August 6, 258, with four of his deacons. This fact is mentioned by Cyprian in a letter to Successus, the last but one of his extant letters.[1]

When the edict actually arrived in Africa the Proconsul was at Utica. Cyprian, in obedience to a former summons, had returned from Curubis to his gardens at Carthage, in order that he might be at hand if wanted. He now received a summons to come to Utica. This he declined to obey, and at once hid himself. He wrote his last letter to his clergy and people to prevent any misapprehension about this temporary concealment.[2] All his dearest friends had joined, he said, in persuading him not to go to Utica, because it was the duty of a bishop to die in his own city. Had he desired to escape death altogether nothing would have been easier than to do so; and there were even many among the distinguished Pagans who loved and honoured him, and counselled this course. To them he turned a deaf ear. He felt that the time had come when he could render to his Church no grander service than by dying for the faith. But he naturally wished that this death should bear the character of a public witness to the honour of Christ, and that all his flock should see how deep had been his sincerity when he had repeatedly counselled them to stand fast in the Lord even unto death. He therefore let them know that he should leave his hiding-place immediately after the Proconsul had returned from Utica to Carthage.

No sooner had he heard of the Proconsul's arrival than he showed himself publicly in his house and

[1] *Ep.* lxxx. The deacon St. Lawrence was martyred on August 10, St. Hippolytus (?) on August 13. [2] *Ep.* lxxx.

gardens.[1] On September 13, 258, two officers (*tesserarii*) were sent to arrest him, and he accompanied them in a chariot to the court, which was held at Sexti, four or five miles from Carthage. The trial was put off till the next day, and he spent the night at the house of one of the officers, who treated him with kindness. The house was surrounded all night by a vast expectant multitude, and Cyprian, solicitous to the last for the welfare of his flock, requested the younger women to go home. Next morning when he was summoned to the Praetorium, he had to make his way on foot through a living wall of spectators. The walk in the heat made him perspire freely, and one of the officers, who was a Christian, civilly begged him to accept a change of garments.[2] Cyprian answered that it was now of no consequence.

"Are you Thascius Cyprianus?" asked the Proconsul.

"I am."

"You have put yourself forward as the Pope of a sacrilegious sect?"

"I have."

"The most sacred Emperors have ordered you to sacrifice."

"I refuse to do so."

"Consider the matter well."

[1] Gibbon's reference to this event is singularly unfair. He says that "the frailty of nature tempted him to withdraw himself by a secret flight from the danger and honour of martyrdom; but, soon recovering that fortitude which his character required, he returned to his gardens" (ch. xv).

[2] Pontius thinks he wanted to keep as a relic "the now bloody sweat of the martyr on his road to God." He also thinks it worth while to mention that the chair provided for him "was covered with linen, as if to secure to him the honours of the episcopate under the very stroke of martyrdom," since the bishop's chair used anciently to be covered with linen.

"Fulfil thine office; a matter so plain needs no consideration."

The Proconsul consulted his assessors, and then reluctantly pronounced the verdict, "Thascius Cyprianus is to be beheaded with the sword."[1]

"Thanks be to God!" replied the bishop. "We will die with him!" shouted the Christians.

The execution followed immediately. Cyprian was conducted to the place of judgment—"a spacious and level plain near the city"—by a military escort of tribunes and centurions, who marched in the midst of a great multitude. There was no cry of exultation, no demonstration of hostility among the Pagans. Wherever his eye fell it was met with looks of respect and sympathy. The days were gone by when the mob used so frequently to yell, "Cyprian to the lion!" His services in the plague were too great and too recent to be forgotten, and even the heathen had learnt to honour and love him. The people, like Zacchaeus, climbed into the trees to see how a Christian could die.

We are told nothing of his last words to his friends. Arrived at the place of execution, he removed the upper part of his clothing—the red lacerna or cloak—and knelt down in prayer. Rising from his knees, he took off his dalmatic, and with a little assistance from his presbyter and subdeacon stood ready for the executioner, to whom, in sign of perfect forgiveness, he ordered his friends to give twenty-five pieces of gold. Then he covered his eyes with his hands and bade the executioner to give the fatal stroke.[2]

[1] The grounds of his sentence are that he is "irreligious," and the ringleader of a *nefarious conspiracy*, and must be made an example, that the law of conformity to the national religion may be ratified in his blood. The Proconsular Acts of his martyrdom are regarded as genuine even by Gibbon.

[2] The Christians dipped handkerchiefs in his blood—one of the

So perished the first martyr-bishop of Northern Africa—"the first in Africa," says Pontius, "to 'dye his priestly diadem' in blood."[1] He had been bishop for thirteen years. To avoid the curiosity of the heathen, the Christians buried his body the same night, by torchlight, with prayer and deep solemnity, in the burial-ground of the Procurator Macrobius Candidus.

That very year Valerian set out on his fatal expedition against the Persians. In 260, two years later, he was defeated by Sapor, and perished in prison by an unknown death. The persecutors of the Christians had not prospered. Decius was the first Roman Emperor who had fallen in battle against the barbarians; Valerian the first who had died in the prison of an enemy. His son and successor Gallienus (A.D. 261) passed the first Edict of Tolerance, which forbade persecution and recognised Christianity as one of the "permissible religions." The peace continued throughout the reign of Claudius (A.D. 268-271), and in his reign were held the two Councils of Antioch (A.D. 264-269) which condemned the fantastic and heretical Paul of Samosata. To complete the chronology we may add that persecution for the most part slumbered during the reigns of Aurelian (270-275), Tacitus (275), Probus (276-282), and Carus (282-284). The "era of martyrs" dates from the accession of Diocletian (A.D. 284).

Cyprian was a man of fine and stately presence. All who saw him were at once impressed with the dignity of his character and bearing. His look was grave, friendly, and earnest, and he dressed in a manner which

earliest recorded instances of this practice. Cyprian is sometimes *confused* with a Bishop of Antioch said to have been martyred under Diocletian (see Tillemont, v. 329).

[1] This is doubtful. It is better to omit Augustine's elaborate parallel between the martyrdom of Cyprian and the death of Christ (*Serm.* 309).

lent no countenance either to worldly vanity or ascetic ostentation.

He displayed many noble elements of character, but he was rather a great ecclesiastic than a great man. Intellectually he stood far below Tertullian, of whose works the greater part of his writings are only a feebler echo. He had neither the breadth nor the learning of his master. He is only a dogmatist at second hand. To theology he has not added a single original conception. His essential poverty and one-sidedness of thought is only concealed by redundant synonyms and sonorous reiterations. His rhetoric is of the cheapest and most commonplace description. There is sometimes a sort of euphuistic pomposity about it, which, after making all allowances for ecclesiastical phraseology and the fact that he lived in an age of degenerate literature, still leaves the impression of unreality. His influence on the Church, which was very great, was mainly practical and in reference to outward organisation. He was the coryphaeus of monarchical episcopacy. He does indeed nominally recognise the co-ordinate rights of the laity.[1] Yet he helped to stereotype a narrow and material view of catholic unity, which he identified with the unanimous agreement of bishops. The Church becomes in his pages exactly what Tertullian says it was not—a "*numerus episcoporum*." This was not an original thought of his own, but only one of which he became the mouthpiece. Ignatius had already exalted episcopacy as the centre of unity, and Irenaeus as a bulwark against heresy. Cyprian combined their views, and extended them into the assertion that the bishop is the "absolute vice-

[1] *Ep.* liii. "Viderint laici hoc quomodo curent"; and in *Conc. Carth.* iii. there are complaints of a reception of the lapsed, "Sine petitu et conscientia plebis."—Milman, *Lat. Christ.* i. 49.

gerent of Christ in things spiritual,"[1] being the representative of apostolic authority, delegated by direct succession.[2] The only logical outcome of these views was the papal usurpation, for the Church could hardly be represented in its visible unity by a number of independent bishops whose opinions and practices frequently came into violent collision. Yet Cyprian, while speaking of the chair of Peter as the chief church "*unde unitas sacerdotalis orta est*" (*Ep.* iv. 19), and "the root and womb of the Catholic Church," not only set aside the decisions of the Bishop of Rome when they disagreed with his own, but addressed him with severe rebuke.[3] His friend and supporter Firmilian went further still in what Döllinger calls his "bitter and passionate answer to St. Stephen." "In his ardour," says Döllinger, "the Bishop of Carthage forgot that he had himself, a short time before, expressed other sentiments in the case of Marcian and the Spanish bishops, and he now claimed for every individual bishop an independence that would not have left even a shadow of unity remaining." But he only stops short at the last step of the "triple abdication." By this time the congregation had practically abandoned its birthright to the presbyter; and the presbyters, in spite of the

[1] Bishop Lightfoot, *Essay on the Christian Ministry, Philip.* p. 238. He says too, that "as Cyprian crowned the edifice of episcopal power, so also was he the first to put forward without relief or disguise the sacerdotal assumptions; and so uncompromising was the tone in which he asserted them, that nothing was left to his successors but to enforce his principles and reiterate his language"; p. 257.

[2] *Ep.* iii. 4: "Apostolos id est Episcopos. . . . Dominus elegit." *De Unit. Eccles.* 4: "Hoc erant utique et caeteri Apostoli quod fuit Petrus."

[3] The well-known words "neque enim quisquam nostrum episcopum se episcoporum constituit" occur in his remarks to the Council of Carthage (*Conc. Carth. ad init.* Migne, iii. 1054). The fourth chapter of his *De Unitate Ecclesiae* has been interpolated in the Papal interest.

protest of men like Montanus and Novatian, had practically effaced their own independence in favour of the bishop. It only remained for the bishops to complete the iron network of centralisation by recognising the autocracy of one universal and infallible Pope.[1]

In Cyprian's pages the great, inspiring, formative ideas of Christianity are dwarfed and dwindled into an ecclesiastical system which would fain bind down with the withes of formalism the free influence of the Spirit. Christ is exclusively identified with the outward Church, and the Church with the episcopate. He has never recognised that Christ may have many sheep which do not belong to the episcopal fold, nor that in the one flock there are, and ever must be, *many* folds. The truth that "Apart from Christ there is no salvation" is distorted into the false assertion that out of the visible Episcopal Church there is no salvation. A priesthood with Judaic functions is thrust in between the soul and its free access to God. At the death of Christ the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and access to the holiest granted to all who seek it; but Cyprian puts the priest at the opening of the curtains, and cannot dream of any admission except through his functions and ministrations. Judaism is restored in a slightly different form, and there is obvious danger that Scribes and Pharisees, only under another name, will still shut the door of the kingdom of heaven, and suffer none to enter except at their will and pleasure. And exalt as you will the authority conferred by apostolic succession, elevate as high as heaven your majestic ideal of a visible catholic unity, you must after all leave the Conscience and the Reason supreme. If a Church grows hopelessly corrupt it may become a positive duty to leave it; if a Church errs it

[1] See Renan, *L'Église Chrétienne*, p. 88.

is an apostasy from Christ, and a crime against the majesty of truth to ignore the error. All the bishops of the day may unite in denying that the world is round, yet Sebastian Cabot will sail round it. Popes, cardinals, bishops, may make Galileo recant on his knees—*Eppur si muove.* All the bishops in the world cannot give any authority to error. We take our place by the side of Huss, and Savonarola, and Luther, though they were burnt or banned by well-nigh all the bishops of their day. Cyprian insists on obedience to the bishops; yet how if the bishop be a Zephyrinus or a Callistus, a Paul of Samosata or a Theophilus of Alexandria, a Marcian or a Basilides, a Mensurius or a Caecilianus?

The same absence of freedom and spirituality is observable in the whole of Cyprian's views of Christianity. They are more Jewish than evangelistic. He must have believed, of course, in the *conditions* of sacramental grace, but he speaks too little of these, too much as though efficacy attached to them *ex opere operato.* He holds that in baptism the priest commands the power of the Holy Ghost to forgive sin by means of sanctified and purified water, but only if he be a Catholic priest and free from every taint of what Cyprian or the episcopate regards as schism or heresy. When the grace of forgiveness for all past sins has been bestowed by this act, it is not valid for future sins. They too require that satisfaction for them should be offered to God, and this satisfaction must be penitence, penance, and good works.[1]

He might have adopted the language of Tertullian about baptism: "In this way, without pomp, with no novelty of preparation, without cost, a man descends

[1] See *Epp.* lxiv. lxix.

into the water, and being immersed, with the utterance of a few words, rises up out of it, scarcely, if at all, cleaner in body, but—incredible consequence—*the possessor of eternal life.*" Such language may be capable of theological explanation, but when left unexplained could only lead to the crude superstition to which, in point of fact, it did lead. Justin speaks in one passage in a somewhat similar but more accurate way; but in another he rightly asks: "What is the use of that baptism which cleanses the flesh and the body alone? Baptize the soul from wrath and covetousness, envy, and hatred, and lo! the body is pure. What need have I of that other baptism who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost?" All Christians need to be baptized in accordance with Christ's command; but that is not baptism which is such only outwardly, and in which all the inward conditions of blessing are not as duly fulfilled as the outward ceremonial.[1]

In Cyprian's view of the Lord's Supper the bread and wine are called the "*Sanctum Domini*"; are endowed not only with sacramental but with magical properties; are reserved; and are even given to children who cannot speak. This appears from the story of the poor little child who had been taken by its nurse to partake of a heathen sacrifice, and who, on being carried by its parents to the Lord's Supper, closed its lips and declined to take the cup. The persistent deacon poured some of the wine down its throat, and violent vomiting ensued. Apart from the irrelevant feebleness of the story, Cyprian's remarks on it show how material were his views. "In that violated mouth and body," he says,

[1] Tert. *De Bapt.* ii. Just. *Apol.* i. 61; *Dial.* xiv. xxix. It is true that Justin is referring to Jewish baptisms, but he cannot possibly mean to exclude Christian baptism from the bearing of the same principle.

"the Eucharist could not remain; the drink sanctified in the blood of the Lord burst from the polluted vitals. Such is the power of God; such His majesty! The secrets of darkness are detected under His light, and not even concealed crimes escaped the observation of the priest of God."[1]

The language of Cyprian, like that of Tertullian, might often be taken to imply that he held the whole doctrine of transubstantiation.[2] It is only from occasional inconsistencies that we find the metaphorical sense in which such expressions must be understood. Thus, in his sixty-third letter, he argues against the *Aquarii* that if water be used instead of wine in the Eucharist "the blood of Christ is not offered, and the Lord's sacrifice is not celebrated with legitimate sanctification. How shall we drink new wine with Christ in the kingdom of His Father, if in the sacrifice of God the Father and of Christ we do not offer wine, nor mingle the cup of the Lord with the Lord's tradition?" After quoting in his usual manner a number of texts, of which some are quite nugatory, he goes on to explain that *neither* water *nor* wine can alone be offered, because "if one offers wine alone *it begins to be the blood of Christ* with-

[1] *De Lapsis*, xxv.

[2] And yet Tertullian says, "Panem qui ipsum corpus *repraesentat*," *c. Marc.* i. 14; and in one of his strongest passages, which represents the Lord's Supper as a sin-offering, Cyprian yet uses the word "sacerdos . . . id quod Christus fecit *imitatur*." Neander says that originally the term "sacrifice" (προσφορά, θυσία) as applied to the Lord's Supper, referred exclusively to the voluntary oblations of bread and wine. "The prayers and thanksgivings offered by men are the only true sacrifices well-pleasing to God. These alone have the Christians learned to offer." Afterwards the reference to the death of Christ became more prominent, and the whole idea of sacrifice which, in the first instance, was simply symbolical, took a direction altogether wide of its true import . . . the earliest indications of which we find in Cyprian" (*Ch. Hist.* i. 450). In Iren. iv. 18, sec. 4, Neander, with some MSS., reads "verbum *per* quod offertur Deo."

out us," and since the water signifies the people (which he proves by Rev. xvii. 15), if water alone be offered "*it begins to be the people* without Christ."[1] Such language takes us far enough from anything which is said in the New Testament about the Supper of the Lord, and it seems to imply that if any "transubstantiation" was supposed, it took place, according to Cyprian, not in the mixed chalice, but in the wine alone.

"Priest" and "altar" and "sacrifice" are keynotes in the writings of Cyprian, and in him they have entirely lost their analogous and metaphorical significance. As far as his language is concerned, in Cyprian the Christian bishop has been transformed altogether into the ἱερεύς and the *sacerdos*—identified in terms and in functions with the sacrificing priests of Judaism and Paganism.[2] He openly borrows the notion from the Old Testament, and it arose from the failure to see the argument of the Epistles to the Romans, the Galatians, and the Hebrews, which were meant to prove so decisively for the Christian world the total abrogation of the Jewish system. In the Gospels and Epistles, as in the most primitive Christianity, no priest is recognised but the one great eternal High Priest after the order, not of Aaron, but of Melchizedek. No other sacrificial priests are known to the Apostles and Evangelists, except so far as the name may be metaphorically applied to the whole body of Christians. Christian ministers are known to them only as "overseers," "elders," "deacons"—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ, which is His Church. These eight words are used, but in no single instance,

[1] *Ep.* lxiii. 13, "Si vero aqua sit sola, plebs incipit esse sine Christo."

[2] *Sacerdos* in Cyprian nearly always means bishop.

by no single writer, is the name "priests" in the sacrificial sense given to Christian ministers, any more than it is given to the Apostles or disciples by Christ himself. He is the one Priest (ἱερεύς), the Sole and Eternal Priest, who abolished all sacrificial priesthood, except so far as he conferred it, in a secondary sense, on all His people. All Christians are kings in Christ's kingdom, priests in His Church, and none are to lord it over the common heritage.[1] His death is the one sacrifice—full, perfect, sufficient, once for all—which abolished for ever the whole system of material sacrifices. Even in the Pastoral Epistles not one word is said about any of those functions which are now regarded as specially sacerdotal. All Christians are priests of a metaphorical priesthood, because they offer something analogous to sacrifice; and no presbyter can offer any other sacrifice or be a "priest" in any other sense than they. An order of ministers is indeed necessary, "who may," as Bishop Lightfoot says, "*in some sense* be designated a priesthood;" but, as he also remarks, "the kingdom of Christ has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and man forgiven. The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such by the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. *As individuals, all Christians are alike.* Tertullian is the first to assert direct sacerdotal claims on behalf of the Christian ministry;"[2] and Cyprian eagerly follows him.

[1] Lightfoot, *Philippians*, pp. 179-183, third ed.

[2] 1 Pet. ii. 5, "Ye (all Christians alike) also are built up to be *a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable unto God"; v. 9, "But ye are an elect race, *a royal priesthood*,"—id. v. 3. Rev. i. 6, "He made us to be *a kingdom*, to be *priests* unto His God and Father"; v. 9, 10, "Thou dost purchase unto God with thy blood *men of every tribe* . . .

Cyprian speaks repeatedly of Christian priests "offering the sacrifice." According to the express doctrine of our Anglican Church—a doctrine taught both by what she says and by what she deliberately refrains from saying—the only sacrifices which Christians, as priests, can offer are the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving (which gave to the Lord's Supper the name of the Eucharist); the sacrifice of their alms and oblations; and the sacrifice of themselves, their bodies, souls, and spirits, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God. For herein our Church has carefully followed the guidance of the Apostles and Evangelists, who speak indeed of the one sacrifice, offered once and once for all by our great High Priest, but otherwise recognise no sacrifices save those so-called by metaphor, of which we have spoken.[1] Even in the Roman Missal we find such sentences as "We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst graciously accept *this offering of Thy whole family;*" and "Remember Thy servants and Thy handmaids who stand around and offer to Thee this *sacrifice of praise.*"[2]

The same remarks apply to the word "altar," which recurs so frequently in the writings of the Fathers. The word is not once used in the New Testament of the Holy Table of the Eucharist, for to give it such an application in Heb. xiii. 10 is to distort the whole context and nullify the whole train of reasoning. Whether in that passage the Cross of Christ be intended by the metaphor, as even Thomas Aquinas thinks, or whether, as Bishop Lightfoot thinks, there be a reference to the

and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and *priests.*" Comp. xx. 6.

[1] See Heb. xiii. 15, 16; Rom. xii. 1; Eph. v. 2. Cyprian gives the name of "sacrifice" to the *oblations* by the people of bread and wine. See Stanley's *Christian Institutions*, pp. 60 *seqq.*

[2] See note on p. 349.

congregation assembled in the sanctuary, nothing surely but a blind partisanship can resort to the desperate expedient of making shipwreck of the argument by explaining it of the Communion Table. Nor again is the word recognised in our Prayer-book, except in one solitary passage of the coronation service, where high authorities have conjectured that it was left by mistake. The name need not indeed be too rigidly rejected, since it is kneeling there that we offer the threefold sacrifices of our praise and thanksgiving, of our alms and oblations, and of ourselves ; yet it should be scrupulously guarded from the false conceptions into which (unless we press too far their metaphorical language) some of the Fathers fell. There is no *renewal* of the sacrifice which we there *commemorate*, a sacrifice which was offered once only and once for all (see p. 349).

Little can be said in favour of Cyprian's method of applying and interpreting Scripture. "He makes mere riddles of texts," says Archbishop Benson. He was well acquainted with the Bible, considered as a mass of texts and fragmentary passages, but he is in no sense of the word an exegete, and his applications of separate scraps of Scripture is often without the least validity. He has nowhere commented on any portion of Scripture, if we except the short treatise on the Lord's Prayer, which is rather a sermon for edification than a specimen of exegesis. One indeed of his letters (*Ep.* lxiii.) "is chiefly taken up with the sacramental meanings of Holy Scripture," and Dr. Pusey says that it, as well as his *Testimonies*, "indicates a full possession of the system of scriptural interpretation, which, whether by intuition or by tradition, was the heritage of the ancient Church, as he in his turn aided to fix that meaning. The epistle is like one flash from a mind we love, disclosing to us as it were a new world

within it. It shows a reverential contemplation and grasp of the hidden meaning of Holy Scripture, which" (though "of a kind which will with many command little sympathy now") "we must the more admire in one whose duties, almost from the time of his conversion, were of intense and absorbing activity." The letter is addressed to Caecilius, perhaps Bishop of Bilta, and is in confutation of those who used water instead of wine at the Lord's Supper. Against these Cyprian "maintains his own mediocrity with humble and shamefast moderation." He argues first from the parable "I am the true Vine." He then finds in the shameful drunkenness of Noah "a type of the future truth" and "a figure of the Passion of our Lord"! He then refers to the bread and wine offered by Melchizedek to Abraham, and to the verse "Wisdom has mingled her wine" (Prov. ix. 2), in which he says that Solomon "foretells by prophetic voice the Cup of the Lord mingled with water and wine"; to the blessing of Judah "He shall wash his garments in wine"; and to the red garments of the Avenger in Is. lxiii. 2. He then refers to baptism such passages as Is. xliii. 18-21; xlviii. 21 (LXX.), and says that "by the name of water (in the Old Testament) baptism is always signified." Returning to wine, he quotes Ps. xxiii. 5, and so continues. That Cyprian was right in reprobating the arbitrary custom of the Aquarians few will deny, but if his arguments are to represent the real meaning of the Old Testament there is an end of the science of interpretation, and the Bible becomes an arbitrary enigma. Adopting this method, heretics could prove what they liked quite as easily as the orthodox, and this danger is both admitted by Tertullian and illustrated by Augustine. We must once for all repudiate the miserable fiction that it is any sign

of orthodoxy and of piety to turn the Bible "into a sort of obscure forest in which dogmatism and allegory hunt in couples."

One of Cyprian's most famous sayings, and one which is characteristic of his whole position and influence, is, "Outside the Church there is no salvation."[1] Like most of his remarks, it is not original, and is found in other authors, even in the tolerant and large-hearted Origen.[2] But on the lips of Origen it meant one thing, on those of Cyprian another. At the best it is one of those sounding platitudes which may mean anything or almost nothing. Any meaning that it may possess depends entirely upon the definition given to the two words "church" and "salvation." If the shibboleth be used in the sense that salvation is of the Lord Jesus Christ and that, as Irenaeus said, "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is the Church,"[3] then it is infinitely true; if it be used in the sense that none will ever be saved but those who have been baptized into the membership of this or that visible body which has arrogated to itself the *exclusive* claim to be the Catholic Church—if it be meant in the sense that there cannot be many folds in the one flock—or even if it be meant that none will be saved but those who have heard and accepted the Gospel of Christ on earth,—even Romish theologians have admitted it to be infinitely false.[4]

The style of Cyprian is lucid, flowing, and persuasive. Lactantius speaks of it in the highest terms, but he says that the heathen despised it.[5] "I have heard a person of undoubted eloquence alter his name by a single letter, and call him Coprianus, as though he

[1] "Extra ecclesiam nulla salus."
[2] *e.g.* Orig. *Hom.* 3 *in Josuam.* [3] Iren. *Haer.* iii. 24.
[4] See note on p. 349.
[5] *Div. Inst.* v. 1. Coprianus, from κόπρος, "dung."

had transferred to anile fables an intellect polished and adopted for better things."

But whatever may have been his limitations, his writings receive lustre from his sincerity. "So much is there of pretence in the world," says Cardinal Newman, "so easy is it to see truths which are hard to practise, so skilful is the intellect in simulating moral greatness, so quick to feel and admire the truth, and so dexterous in professing and adorning it, that we naturally look out for some assurance which professions seldom supply, that we are reading what is real and spontaneous, and not a mere semblance of high qualities."[1]

NOTE ON FIRMILIAN.

The lives of Cyprian and Origen have brought us in contact with two remarkable men — Firmilian, Bishop of Caesarea, and Dionysius of Alexandria. We may here add a few words about them, and about Gregory, surnamed "Thaumaturgus" or the Wonder-worker, Bishop of Neocaesarea. These three eminent bishops were associated in the condemnation of the "famous-infamous" Paul, who became Bishop of Samosata some two years after Cyprian died.

Firmilian is one of those prelates who occupied a very distinguished position in his own day but who has become comparatively obscure to later ages, because he wrote but little. Hence he is not even mentioned by Jerome in his catalogue of illustrious writers. Of the particulars of his history very little is known, and his name is chiefly prominent in connection with others.

He was Bishop of the Cappadocian Caesarea, and by A.D. 232 was already conspicuous.[2] He was a warm friend of Origen. "He held Origen in such high honour," says Eusebius, "that sometimes he invited him into his own regions for the benefit of the churches, and sometimes journeyed to Judea to visit him, and spent long periods of time with him in order to improve in his knowledge of theology."

[1] *Libr. of the Fathers*, iii. 23. [2] Euseb. vi. 26.

He was also a friend and admirer of Dionysius of Alexandria. In A.D. 252 a council was held at Antioch to oppose the Novatians, who had found a powerful supporter in Fabius, Bishop of Antioch. Pope Cornelius wrote a strong letter of warning to Fabius, and Firmilian wrote to Dionysius urging him to come to the council which was convened to consider the question. Dionysius, however, declined the invitation, because meanwhile Fabius had died and had been succeeded by the orthodox Demetrian.

In 256 Cyprian wrote to Firmilian on the subject of rebaptism, on which, as we have seen, he had a serious difference with Stephen, Bishop of Rome. The long and elaborate reply, which is printed among the letters of Cyprian,[1] and was probably rendered into Latin by him, is the most important of Firmilian's extant writings. He heartily agrees with Cyprian that heretics ought to be rebaptized, and he speaks with such energy of reprobation about the haughty and uncharitable conduct of Stephen that his letter has given deep offence to Romanist writers. He charges Stephen with folly, and with using his position unworthily by helping to destroy the unity of the Church. Firmilian and Cyprian were theoretically wrong, but the unconciliatory self-assertion of Stephen rendered the quarrel needlessly bitter, and Firmilian may have been further exasperated by the ignorant condemnation of Origen, which had found its stronghold in the Church of Rome.

Firmilian enjoyed a long episcopate. We hear of him again in A.D. 266, when he presided at the second Council of Antioch, which was summoned to try Paul of Samosata. Firmilian, with the fullest support of other eminent bishops who were present, and strengthened by a letter from Dionysius of Alexandria, who was too old to be present in person, condemned in the clearest manner the Sabellian and other errors of the Bishop of Samosata. Paul succeeded in explaining away or repudiating his errors, so that, at the first meeting of the synod, Firmilian induced the bishops to postpone their condemnation. It soon, however, became apparent that Paul's explanations and recantation were temporising and insincere. The council met again in 269, and was convened for a third time in 272. Firmilian was on his way to Antioch to preside once more at the council, when he died at Tarsus.

He was eminent alike as a theologian and as a philosopher. His sermons are honourably quoted by Basil for their orthodox precision, and his friendship with three such men as Origen, Dionysius, and Cyprian, as well as his being chosen President of the Councils of Antioch, show the large space which he occupied in the esteem of his contemporaries.

[1] *Ep.* 75.

NOTE ON DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA.[1]

Dionysius well deserves the titles of "The great Bishop of Alexandria," given him by Eusebius, and of "Teacher of the Catholic Church," given him by Athanasius. He is one of the most interesting and beautiful characters of ecclesiastical history.

He was born about A.D. 195, the son of Gentile parents, who were wealthy and in an honourable position. The brightest worldly prospects seemed to be opening before him when he was converted from Paganism by reading the Epistles of St. Paul. This impression was further deepened by the teaching of Origen.[2] Abandoning his hopes of earthly distinction, he was baptized by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, and entered the Catechetical School, of which he was to become one of the brightest ornaments.

Origen was succeeded by Heraclas in the presidency of the Catechetical School in 231, and Heraclas was raised to the bishopric of Alexandria in 233. Dionysius then became the head of the famous school, and, being a presbyter, held that position for sixteen or seventeen years, till about A.D. 248 he succeeded Heraclas as Bishop of Alexandria. He tells us that it was his custom to read the books of heretics as well as of the orthodox, and that he was expressly encouraged to do so by a divine vision, which he accepted as real because it accorded with the apostolic injunction, "Show yourselves good money changers"—*Γίνεσθε δοκιμοὶ τραπεζῖται.*

In his letters to Domitius and Didymus (A.D. 251), and to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, he gives a very touching account of the Alexandrian martyrs—men and women, young and old, maidens and matrons, soldiers, and private citizens, who perished in the first Decian persecution by stripes, by fire, or by the sword.[3] He ranks himself among those others for whom a very long lifetime has not proved sufficient to secure their appearance as men acceptable to the Lord, though he believes that Christ has preserved him for another convenient season.[4]

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[1] The chief authorities for the life of Dionysius are: Euseb. *H. E.* vi. vii.; *Praep. Evang.* xiv. Jer. *De Vir. ill.* 69; *Praef.* Lib. xviii. *in Esaiam.* Athan. *De Sentent. Dionysii; De Syn. Nic. Decretis.* Basil, *De Sp. Sanct.* 29; *Epp. ad Amphiloch. ad Maxim.* Migne, *Patrol. Graeca*, x. 1233 ff. 1575 ff. Dittrich, *Dionysius der Grosse von Alexandrien*, Freib. 1867. There is a translation of his works by Salmond in the Ante-Nicene Library, vol. xx.

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 11.

[3] A local outbreak at Alexandria preceded the actual persecution, which happened A.D. 249-251.

[4] Euseb. vii. 11.

A certain bishop named Germanus seems to have taunted him, just as Cyprian was taunted, with cowardice and desertion of his flock.[1] In reply (A.D. 258-9) Dionysius calls God to witness that he did not fly by his own choice, and (like Cyprian) he pleads a divine intimation. When the edict was promulgated the Prefect Sabinus sent a spy, of the body known as *Frumentarii milites*, to search for him; but though he remained at home for four days, the spy, making sure that he had tried to escape, searched for him in the fields, roads, and rivers, and never thought of going to the bishop's house! Profiting by this folly, which he regarded as a sort of heaven-sent *ἀορασία*, Dionysius obeyed an inward revelation, and fled with his domestics (*παῖδες*) and certain brethren.[2] At sunset, however, he and his companions were seized by soldiers and sent off to Taposiris. One Christian named Timotheus—perhaps a son of Dionysius—had not been arrested, and, finding the house guarded, fled in perturbation, and mentioned the capture of the bishop to a rustic who was on his way to a marriage feast. The tidings broke up the festival, and all the guests rushed to the place of the bishop's captivity so tumultuously that the guards fled. Dionysius and his friends were stretched on bare couches half-dressed, and, taking the rustics for robbers, entreated either to be left alone or to be put to death at once. But the bishop was seized hand and foot by these unknown friends, and, in spite of his struggles, was hurried away and placed on an unsaddled ass. He was then carried against his will to a place of safety. In the Valerian persecution, A.D. 257, with the presbyter Maximus[3] and the deacons Faustus, Eusebius, and Chaeremon, he was brought before the Praefect Æmilianus,[4] who ordered him to recant his profession. He replied, "We must obey God rather than man," and was banished, sick as he was, to the desert village of Cephro. Here he seems to have been shut up with no companions except Gaius and Peter. In time, however, they were joined by a considerable church, and, in spite of being stoned and persecuted when they met for worship, they effected some conversions. Æmilianus then banished

[1] Euseb. vi. 40, vii. 1.

[2] Some (*e.g.* Tillemont, iv. 537) understand *παῖδες* to mean the bishop's children, and think that Timotheus, to whom he addressed his lost book *On Nature*, was his son (*Τιμοθέῳ τῷ παιδί*). Dittrich supposes the word *παῖδες* to mean scholars resident in his house.

[3] Maximus was sent secretly to Alexandria to console the persecuted Christians. He afterwards succeeded Dionysius in the episcopate. On the persecution and the martyrs who fell in it, see Euseb. vi. 41.

[4] One of the so-called "thirty tyrants," who seems to have seized the imperial power in Egypt.

them to Collutho, still farther in the Libyan desert, but in the vicinity of a road, so that they could at any moment be easily arrested.

Dionysius, therefore, might fairly claim to be a confessor, and asks, "Can Germanus reckon up in his own case as many condemnations (ἀποφάσεις) as we can number in ours, and confiscations, and proscriptions, and spoilings of goods, and loss of dignities, and despisings of worldly honour, and contemnings of the laudations of governors and councillors, and patient subjections to the threats of enemies, and to outcries, perils, persecutions, wanderings, and the pressure of difficulties, and all kinds of trouble such as befell in the time of Decius and Sabinus, and such as I have been suffering under the present severities of Æmilianus?"

"When peace had scarcely yet been established," says Eusebius, "Dionysius returned to Alexandria." But when sedition and war again broke out and made it impossible for him to have access to all the brethren in that city, divided as they were into different parties, he exhorted them again in an Easter letter, as if he were still an exile."[1] This letter is addressed to Hierax, and mentions the miseries caused by alternate floods and dryings-up of the Nile, and by seasons of malaria and noxious exhalations which had materially diminished the population of the city.[2] The unhealthy season naturally produced a raging pestilence; and of the horrors of this plague Dionysius gives a graphic account in another Festal letter. As usual, the season of misery brought out a marked contrast between the heartlessly selfish panic displayed by the Pagans and the cheerful alacrity shown by Christians in all works of charity and mercy to the living and the dead. The guild of Parabolani, whose duty it was at all risks to undertake the care of burials, is said to have derived its origin from the exertions of Christians during this pestilence.

The high position of Dionysius, together with his ability, learning, and exquisite moderation, caused him to be appealed to in almost every controversy of importance which at that time agitated the Church. Thus in A.D. 251 both parties sought his advice in the schism of Novatian.[3] To Novatian he wrote a kindly letter, telling him that if, as he said, he had been consecrated Bishop of Rome against his will, he ought to prove his sincerity by a voluntary retirement "so as to avoid rending the Church of God." A martyrdom endured to prevent a schism would have been as glorious as

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[1] Euseb. vii. 21. Perhaps his return was rendered possible by the edict of Gallienus, A.D. 260.

[2] Id. 22.

[3] Eusebius, by a common confusion, calls him Novatus, *H. E.* vi. 45.

one for refusing to worship idols; nay, even more so, since it would be a witness not only for an individual soul, but for the whole Church. If he cannot induce his followers to retract the false step which they had taken, he might at least save his own soul. The schism of Novatian and his hard dogmas would have been peculiarly uncongenial to the peace-loving and merciful Bishop of Alexandria. "We are justly hostile," he says, "to Novatian, who has hewn the Church to pieces, and dragged some of the brethren into impieties and blasphemies. He has introduced a most unhallowed teaching about God, and falsely represented our most merciful Lord Jesus Christ as ruthless. And besides all this, he nullifies baptism, and utterly drives away the Holy Spirit from them (those who have sinned after baptism), even though there was some hope of His remaining in or returning to them."[1] To Pope Cornelius he wrote saying that the death of Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, who had Novatian leanings, had made him deem it needless to accept Firmilian's invitation that he should go to the Council of Antioch.

In the bitterly debated question as to the rebaptism of heretics (A.D. 256-7), he again appeared in the beautiful *rôle* of a mediator. He wrote several letters on the subject to the arrogant Stephen. In the first, which is extant, he tells him of the general peace of the Churches;[2] and when Stephen refused to communicate with Firmilian and the Eastern bishops, he begs him to consider the serious consequences of his conduct. He also wrote to Sixtus II. and to Dionysius of Rome on the same subject, which he treated more fully in a book *On Penitence*. The object of his letter to Fabius of Antioch was to show him how mercifully the Alexandrian martyrs had behaved towards those who had fallen.[3]

He took a leading part in the controversy against the Sabellians. In his *Exercitations against Sabellius* his reaction led him to use language which might well have seemed tritheistic and Arian. Indeed Basil, in so many words, but unjustly and perhaps only at second-hand, charges him with having been the originator of Arianism, since he had said that "God is the Maker of Christ."[3] For these incautious expressions, his namesake, Dionysius of Rome, called him to task. The great Alexandrian, though he in no sense recognised any jurisdiction over him by the Bishop of Rome, promptly wrote a conciliatory reply.[4] In this he points out that perhaps the illustrations which he had used against Sabellius were not wholly fortunate, but he wished them to be regarded as illustra-

[1] Euseb. vii. 8. [2] Id. vii. 2. [3] Basil, *Ep.* i. 9.
[4] Known as the *Elenchus et Apologia*.

tions only, and he desired his doctrine to be judged *as a whole*. He furnishes the amplest explanation of his phrase that "God is the Maker of Christ," showing that he had merely applied it to the Incarnation, and that even otherwise the phrase was capable of a harmless explanation. He complains with justice that his critics misrepresented his real views by garbled quotations, and sometimes with malicious design. Much of the suspicion created in the mind of the Roman Dionysius had been only caused by the fact that the Easterns and the Westerns used *Hypostasis* in different senses.[1] It is sufficient proof of the orthodoxy of Dionysius that his great countryman Athanasius, who had the full defence before him, was satisfied by his explanations, and held that his faith was unimpeachable.[2]

His letter to the Bishop Basilides, on various canons, treated of questions of discipline and the Lenten fast.

Dionysius, as we have seen, was also appealed to in the troubles caused by the heresies and malversations of Paul of Samosata. With the heretic himself he seems to have dealt in the spirit of loving fairness by which he was characterised; but he condemned his errors with decisive clearness, and, as he was too ill to go in person to the final meeting of the Council of Antioch in A.D. 265, he wrote a weighty letter, which was read at the council.[3]

One of his most delightful successes was won over the Millenarians. An Egyptian bishop named Nepos had adopted the common belief in a Jewish and corporeal millennium, which he endeavoured to prove, out of the Revelation of St. John, in a book called *A Refutation of the Allegorists*. The book had great influence, being indeed convincing to all who saw the dangerous excesses of mystical interpretations. Dionysius, in reply, wrote two books, *On the Promises*, of which fragments are preserved by Eusebius.[4] "In many other respects," he says, "I accept the opinion of Nepos, and love him at once for his faith, his laboriousness, and his patient study in the Scriptures, as also for his great efforts in psalmody, by which even now many of the brethren are delighted. I hold the man too in deep respect still more, inasmuch as he has gone to his rest before us. Nevertheless the truth is to be prized and reverenced above all things else." How different would ecclesiastical history have been if all controversy had been conducted in this calm and courteous spirit!

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[1] Dionysius of Rome used it exclusively of the One Divine Essence, Dionysius of Alexandria of the Essence of each Person.

[2] Athan. *De Decr. Nic. Syn.* 25, and *De Sententiâ Dionysii.*

[3] The extant letter is spurious. [4] *H. E.* vii. 24, 25.

The book contained two most remarkable passages. In one of these he tells us how he convened the presbyters and teachers of the district of Arsinoe, and publicly discussed with them the subject of Chiliasm. The discussion was continued for three whole days, and at its close Coracion, the chief defender of the views of Nepos, was so fully convinced that he gave up his opinion, "and engaged to us that he would no longer hold by it, nor discuss it, nor mention it, nor teach it. The rest of the brethren, also, who were present, were delighted with the conference, and with the conciliatory spirit and the harmony displayed by all."

In another passage he gives us the finest piece of independent Biblical criticism to be found in the writings of any Father of the first three centuries. It is on the Revelation of St. John, and is directed to the proof that the book cannot be interpreted in a bald, literal sense, and cannot be by St. John the Apostle and Evangelist, but was written by some one else of the same name. He is led to this conclusion by observing that whereas there is an absolute identity of style between the Gospel and the Epistle, "the Apocalypse is totally different and altogether distinct from this style, and I might almost say that it does not even come near it or border upon it. Neither does it contain a syllable in common with these other books." He proceeds to point out that whereas the Gospel and Epistle are written in faultless Greek, the Apocalypse abounds in barbarous idioms, and even in solecisms. He does not deny that the writer "saw a revelation, and received knowledge and prophecy"; but he thinks that he was either John Mark (Acts xiii. 5, 13) or a John the Elder as distinguished from John the Apostle, since there were two tombs at Ephesus which bore the name of John.

Elsewhere I have entered fully into these views, and shown why they must be regarded as untenable. The disintegration of John the Elder from John the Apostle and Evangelist I believe to be an error, and Dionysius made no allowance for what I hold to be the established result of modern criticism, that the Apocalypse was written perhaps as much as thirty years before the Gospel, and that those years were spent by the Apostle in Greek-speaking cities and under the influence of conditions absolutely different from those by which he was surrounded when he wrote his earlier work. Into these points it is needless to enter here; but even if the conclusion of Dionysius cannot be established, his own remarks, with those of Julius Africanus on the Story of Susannah and on the Genealogies, must be regarded as the earliest specimens of Biblical criticism among the Fathers, and also among the most distinguished.[1] They

[1] I may perhaps refer to my *History of Interpretation*, pp. 206, 207.

make us regret the loss (except in small fragments) of the bishop's *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, and other expository works.[1]

When the world began to turn against Origen, Dionysius still remembered the debt of gratitude which he owed to that holy teacher. In A.D. 259 he addressed to him a letter "On Persecution," and after his death he wrote a letter to Theotecnus, Bishop of Caesarea, in his praise. He was an old man when he felt unable to be present at the synod at Antioch in A.D. 265, and he died shortly afterwards.

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[1] Dr. Neale says: "The loss of the writings of Dionysius is one of the greatest that have been suffered by ecclesiastical history."—*Holy Eastern Church*, i. 84.

NOTE ON "EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS" (p. 340).

To what I have said on this assertion (*supra*, p. 340) I may add the remarks of Roman Catholic theologians, which show that the word "Church" is practically extended to include even Jews and Pagans. "The notion *that no grace is given outside the visible Church*," says Mr. H. N. Oxenham, "is not an opinion merely, but a heresy directly contradicting the Scriptural statement '*Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum.*' —Wisd. i. 7." To the objection that Jews or Heathen might be saved through faith in God, while invincibly ignorant of Christ, and therefore not Christians, De Lugo (who quotes St. Thomas Aquinas) replies that such Jews and Heathen will "in God's sight *practically be numbered among Christians*" (*De Fid.* xii. 3). Similarly Suarez says that a man, though unbaptized, may by implicit faith in Christ have sufficiently the *implicit* purpose of baptism (*De Fid.* xii. 4). See H. N. Oxenham (*Catholic Eschatology*, p. 26). But what becomes of the practical value of Cyprian's assertion if "the Church" be thus made to include Jews, Heathen, and the unbaptized?

NOTE ON THE WORDS "ALTAR" AND "SACRIFICE" (p. 337).

I have here (p. 337) only expressed the views of BISHOP COSINS, who says "in which respect" (*i.e.* our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving), "and divers others besides, the Eucharist may, by allusion, analogy, and extrinsical denomination, be fitly called a sacrifice, and the Lord's table an altar, *though neither of them can be strictly or properly so called.*"

VII

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

"Κλήμης ὁ στρωματεὺς, πρεσβύτερος Ἀλεξανδρείας, ἄριστος διδάσκαλος ἐν τῇ κατὰ Χριστὸν φιλοσοφίᾳ, συντάττων δίελαμπεν."—EUSEB. *Chron.* p. 216.

THERE was no city in the Empire in which a graver task was assigned to the great scholars and teachers of Christianity than the city of Alexandria. It was a centre of the most energetic intellectual vitality; and there, like the seething of the grapes in the vine cluster, the speculations of men of every religion and every nationality exercised a reciprocal influence on each other.

A single letter of Hadrian, preserved by Vopiscus, will show the confusions of thought and intermixture

[1] EDITIONS OF CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS.—*Editio Princeps*, P. Victorius, *Flor.* 1550; F. Sylburg, *Heidelb.* 1592; Klotz, *Lips.* 1831-34.

LIVES.—The earlier authorities are: Euseb. *H. E.* v. 11, vi. 6, xi. 13; Jer. *Catal.* 38; Photius, *Cod.* 109-111; Böhringer; Cognat, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, Paris, 1858; Canon Westcott, in *Dict. of Christian Biography.*

See too, on Alexandrian theology in general, besides the ordinary Church historians: Fabricius, *Bibl. Graec.* v. 102; Matter, *Hist. de l'École d'Alex.* Paris, 1840; Guericke, *De Schol. Alexandrinâ*, Hal. 124; Dähne, *Jud. Alex. Religiousphilos.* 1834; Bishop Kaye, *Clem. of Alex.* Lond. 1834; Freppel, *Clém. d'Alex.* Paris, 1866; Baur, *Christliche Gnosis.*

of religions which prevailed in that cosmopolitan city, and the aspect presented by its religious syncretism to a cool and cynical observer. "Those who worship Serapis," he says, in a letter to a friend, "are Christians, and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are votaries of Serapis. There is no ruler of a synagogue there, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, who is not an astrologer, who is not a soothsayer, who is not a gymnast. The patriarch of the Jews himself when he comes to Egypt is forced by one party to worship Serapis, by the other Christ. They have but one God who is no God; him Christians, him Jews, him all races worship alike." To the disdainful and sceptical mind of the Emperor, who deified his own unhappy minion, Christianity, Gnosticism, Judaism, Paganism, were all forms of one universal charlatanry and sham.

But Alexandria was pre-eminently the home of theosophy, the seat of those studies in which Judaism and the religions of the East were deeply affected by contact with Platonism and other schools of Greek philosophy. Christianity, while making itself felt among these forms of belief, received in turn a powerful impress from the prevalent conceptions. In such a city as Alexandria—with its museum, its libraries, its lectures, its schools of philosophy, its splendid synagogue, its avowed atheists, its deep-thinking Oriental mystics—the Gospel would have been powerless if it had been unable to produce teachers who were capable of meeting Pagan philosophers and Jewish Philonists and eastern Eclectics on their own ground. Such thinkers would refuse their attention to men who could not understand their reasonings, sympathise with their perplexities, refute their fundamental arguments, and meet them in the

spirit of Christian courtesy. Different instruments are needed for different ends. Where Clement of Rome might have been useless, Clement of Alexandria became deeply influential. Where a Tertullian would only have aroused contempt and indignation, an Origen won leading Pagans to the faith of Christ. From Alexandria came the refutation of Celsus, from Alexandria the defeat of Arius. It was the cradle of Christian theology.

The preaching of Christianity, like the method in which God spake in times past to the fathers, was fragmentary and multifarious. It presented to the world a richly variegated wisdom. The Church stood before the world like the king's daughter of the psalmist, *circumamicta varietatibus*, clothed in garments of divers colours. She could be simple with the unlearned, philosophical with the philosophers; to the Jews she became as a Jew, to the Greeks as a Greek, and in a good and noble sense, all things to all men. St. Paul spoke in one manner to the peasants at Lystra, in another to the Epicureans and Stoics at Athens, in another to the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. To few men was granted this splendid versatility. But what one man could not have done was done by the variety of Christian teachers. The works of the early Fathers, though removed from the sacred writings by an almost immeasurable distance of inferiority, yet have something of the same manifold diversity. They touch the many chords of many hearts.

It was well for the progress of Christianity that in Alexandria, the University of the ancient world, the city in which the East and the West met together in thought and religion as well as in commerce and travel, a cosmopolitan form of teaching was pre-

sented to citizens of cosmopolitan sympathies. Tertullian, with his anathemas against the philosophers as "patriarchs of the heretics," and Cyprian, with his mechanical panacea of episcopal unity, would have been signally out of place among reasoners who could not have understood them, and whom they themselves signally failed to understand. Clement of Alexandria and Origen were men of an entirely different stamp. They were themselves philosophers in spirit; they had been trained in the whole circle of Pagan sciences; they could argue with the pupils of Plato or Zeno on equal terms. They could enforce respect by their learning, and attention by their large-minded sympathy, where rhetorical denunciations and ecclesiastical anathemas would only have been listened to with a frown of anger or a smile of disdain. Pagan thinkers would have paid attention to Clement when he spoke of Plato as truly noble and half-inspired;[1] they would have looked on the African father as an ignorant railer, who had nothing better to say of Socrates than that he was "the Attic buffoon," or of Aristotle than "miserum Aristotelem!" Such arguments as Tertullian's "It is credible because it is absurd . . . it is certain because it is impossible" would have been regarded as worse than useless in reasoning with philosophers.

Philo had already devoted his lifelong labours to produce at least a syncretism, if it could hardly be called an eclectic fusion, between Platonic philosophy and the Jewish faith. The idea of the Logos served to unite the speculations of the Timaeus with those of the Pentateuch, and by the adoption from the Stoics of the allegorical method of interpretation it was not impossible

[1] *Paed.* iii. 11; *Strom.* v. 8. ὁ πάντα ἄριστος Πλάτων . . . οἷον θεοφορούμενος.

to represent Plato as "an Attic Moses." The Stoics had in this way got rid of all the stumbling-blocks in the Iliad and the Odyssey, which were to the Greeks a sort of national Bible. This heathen method of allegorising or spiritualising served equally well in the hands of Philo and his predecessors to make Moses Platonise and Plato Mosaise. It would have been strange indeed if cultivated Christian teachers had not availed themselves of an instrument so potent, and one which they found ready to their hands—the only instrument by which in the then existing state of knowledge they were able to reconcile the teaching of the Old Testament with that of the New. They could thus show that there was nothing in these great confluent rivers of revelation which prevented their junction with all that was pure and fertilising in the streams of classic thought. The Jordan flowed into the Lake of Galilee, and allegoric interpretation was the "secret sluice" or *katabathron* by which a junction might be effected between these hallowed waters of Judaism and Christianity and the

> "Mellifluous streams which watered all the Schools
> Of Academics, old and new, with those
> Surnamed Peripatetics, and the School
> Of Epicureans, and the Stoic severe."

And the task was all the more necessary because there had already been a turbid and illegitimate mixture of these Jewish, heathen, and Christian waters. Christianity had not been preached for thirty years before there appeared the divers germs of heresy which ripened into many Protean forms of error known by the one comprehensive name of Gnosticism.

Knowledge—Gnosis—held a place deservedly high in the Christian system. It is the characteristic of all parties and factions (*αἱρέσεις*) to assume to themselves

the arrogant monopoly of some laudatory title; and all the elaborators of that superfine Christianity which preached a different Christ and another Gospel claimed for themselves the exclusive prerogative of "knowledge." There were Jewish Gnostics, like the Ebionites and the pupils of Cerinthus; and Pagan Gnostics; and Syrian Gnostics, like Bardesanes; and Zoroastrian Gnostics, like Manes. There were ascetic Gnostics, like Basilides, and licentious Gnostics, like the Nicolaitans and Carpocrates. There were Gnostics who taught and believed insane nonsense, like the Cainites and Ophites, and Gnostics of high culture and vivid imagination, like Valentinus. There were Gnostics whose Christianity was merely a feeble graff on Judaism, like the Nazarenes; and Gnostics who, like Marcion, flung aside the Old Testament with abhorrence, and saw in the Jewish Jehovah a malignant Demiurge. But all these sects claimed the possession of a *knowledge*, which they often represented as secret and traditional, and their views were all swept together under the name Gnosticism, for which an antidote was needed.

The true "*scorpiace*" or antidote for the scorpion's sting of these heresies was provided far less by the fervid African declaimer than by the learned and large-minded teachers of Alexandria. They too claimed the name of Gnostics, but of Catholic and Christian Gnostics, and it was their aim to add knowledge to faith, and to educate wisdom into perfectness. Their main work was not like that of the school of Africa—the fixation and formulation of dogma, or the organisation of the ecclesiastical system—but it was to present Christianity as the religion of the Spirit, a religion which could answer or silence the most subtle questions of the intellect, and in which the soul of the deepest philosopher could find rest.

Great therefore was the work of the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria, and almost immeasurable was the influence which it exercised over the future of Christianity. Yet of its two greatest teachers Clement was grudgingly denied the title of saint, and Origen—one of the saintliest souls who ever lived—was one of the three of whose very salvation subsequent Church writers, in pitiable ignorance and deplorable lack of charity, expressed an open doubt.

Tradition—guided by we know not what circumstances—fondly attributed the foundation of the school of Alexandria to the Evangelist St. Mark. However that may be, it first emerges into the light of history in the days of Pantaenus, the teacher and predecessor of Clement.[1] We know but little of this venerable teacher of whom Clement speaks with high admiration and whom Origen describes as the first Christian who had fully availed himself of the stores of heathen learning and philosophy. Eusebius says that he had been a Stoic,[2] and perhaps he was by birth an Athenian.[3] He went on a mission to India and found (we are told) a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew in Hebrew characters which had been left there by St. Bartholomew. It is probable that he was a presbyter, and there is reason to believe that he continued to be at the head of the school as late as the beginning of the reign of Severus (A.D. 193). He was famous as an expositor of Scripture, but Eusebius makes no use of his writings. Only two insignificant specimens of his exegesis have been preserved, and it would be unfair to judge him by them.[3] The subsequent heads of the school until it fell into

[1] Nicephorus Callistus preserves a statement that Athenagoras preceded Pantaenus as head of the school, but this is uncertain.

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 19. [3] Routh, *Rell. Sacr.* i. 378.

extinction were Clement, Origen, Heraclas, Dionysius, Pierius, Theognostus, Peter Martyr, Arius, and the great blind scholar Didymus.[1]

Titus Flavius Clemens—for so he is called by Eusebius and Photius—is well known to us by considerable remains of his writings, but we are imperfectly acquainted with the facts of his biography. His name seems to show some connection with the Flavian imperial family, for it is identical with that of the nephew of Vespasian who was consul A.D. 95, and who was put to death by Domitian on a charge of atheism and of Judaising,[2] though his sons had been proclaimed heirs-presumptive to the throne. But we can say nothing certain on this subject. Though it is clear that Clement had received a liberal education,[3] and there is about his writings an indefinable stamp of distinction, he may have only been the descendant of some wealthy freedman of the Flavian house.

It is not known where he was born. Epiphanius says that some called him an Athenian and some an Alexandrian.[4] The date of his birth is also conjectural, but he wrote in the reign of Severus (A.D. 193-211), and the death of Commodus (A.D. 192) is a *terminus a quo* in his writings.[5] Hence he was born about A.D. 155. It is probable that his parents were Pagans.[6] They must

[1] To avoid repeating what I have said elsewhere I must refer to the *Early Days of Christianity*, i. 279-284.

[2] Sueton. *Domit.* 15, Dio Cass. lxvii. 14.

[3] Cyril, *c. Jul.* vi. p. 205, πλείστης τε ὅσης Ἑλληνικῆς ἱστορίας εἰς ἀκοὴν ελθών, and uses sinister expressions, vii. p. 231, x. 342 (ed. 1638). Quoted in Potter's ed. of Clement, i. *ad init.*

[4] *Haer.* xxxii. 6, Jacobi (*Herzog, s.v.*), thinks it certain from his allusions that he was not a native Egyptian.

[5] *Strom.* i. 21 (ed. Potter, p. 403).

[6] *Paed.* i. 1 comp. ii. sec. 62. · Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* ii. 2.

have been persons of some wealth and position, for they gave their son every intellectual advantage, and seem to have left him in easy circumstances. His books furnish the amplest proof that he had learnt logic on the basis of Aristotle's *Organon*, and that besides his knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy he had also studied music, rhetoric, and grammar. He does not seem to have known Latin, though in one passage he refers to Varro. Certainly he shows a profound acquaintance with heathendom even in its "depths of Satan." Eusebius says (*Praep. Ev.* ii. 2) that he was well fitted to expose the baseness of Paganism, because he had passed through it, and escaped from its contagion.[1] He even seems to have been initiated in the mysteries, for, after telling a strange story about them, he says, "I have eaten out of the drum, I have drunk out of the cymbal, I have carried the *kernos*, I have slipped into the chamber."[2] Unhappily he has not told us the manner of his conversion, but in the course of his wide reading and extensive travels he was brought to believe in Christ. In one of his few biographical allusions he speaks of the teachers—it is difficult to be certain how many he means—who brought him to Christianity.

"Now this work of mine in writing (the *Stromateis*) is not artfully constructed for display; but my memoranda are stored up for old age as a remedy against forgetfulness (λήθης φάρμακον), truly an image and outline of those vivid and living discourses which I was privileged to hear, and of blessed and truly remarkable men.

[1] The expression ὁ θαυμάσιος Κλήμης and ὁ ἡμέτερος Κλήμης, *Probapt.* ii. 14, show the admiration of Eusebius for him.

[2] The expressions mean generally γέγονα μυστικός. The *kernos* was a clay jar full of various seeds. He says that the symbols of initiation would make one inclined to laugh.

"Of these, the one in Greece, an Ionian,[1] the other in Magna Graecia, the first of these from Coele Syria, the second from Egypt, and others in the east. One was born in the land of Assyria,[2] and the other a Hebrew in Palestine.[3]

"When I came upon the last (he was the first in power), having tracked him out concealed in Egypt, I found rest. He the true, the Sicilian bee, gathering the spoil of the flowers of the prophetic and apostolic meadow, engendered in the souls of his hearers a deathless element of knowledge.

"Well, they preserving the tradition of the blessed doctrine derived directly from the holy Apostles, Peter, James, John, and Paul, the son receiving it from the father (but few were like the fathers), came by God's will to us also to deposit those ancestral and apostolic seeds."[4]

No one has ever doubted that the last teacher alluded to was "the blessed elder" Pantaenus, whom according to Eusebius (vi. 13) he mentioned by name as his teacher in the *Outlines*, and who is also referred to in the excerpts from Theodotus as "*our* Pantaenus."[5] The date of his death, or perhaps only of his retirement, or of his mission to India, was about A.D. 189. Clement had possibly acted already as his colleague, and about

[1] Some conjecture that Athenagoras is meant.

[2] Not improbably Tatian; Baronius, less probably, says Bardesanes (who was born at Edessa).

[3] Baronius conjectures that this was Theophilus, Bishop of Caesarea (*Ann. ad* A.D. 185). Valerian thinks it was Theodotus from whose writings Clement made large extracts in his *Hypotyposes* (ἐκ τῶν Θεοδότου ἀνατολικῆς διδασκαλίας. See Cave, *Script. Eccl.* i. 5, 3, and (contra) V. Cölln, in *Ersch and Grüber*).

[4] *Strom.* i. 2, sec. ii. I take the translations (sometimes altering them by the original) from the Ante-Nicene Library, *Clement*, i. 355.

[5] *Eclog.* 56.

this time he became his successor.[1] Pantaenus had left on the mind of Clement a deep impress of Stoic morality, eclectic philosophy, and allegoric interpretation, but the originality and distinction of Clement's own intellectual character gave a new charm to all that he had learnt from his eminent predecessor.[2]

He continued to preside over the school for thirteen or fourteen years. During that period he was ordained presbyter,[3] and he devoted his efforts to writing as well as to teaching. It will ever be among his chief glories that Origen and Alexander of Jerusalem were numbered among his illustrious pupils. Beyond this there is not a single record of these years, though it seems certain that the school flourished under his presidency. It could hardly do otherwise under a student so learned, so liberal, and of such large experience.[4] For certainly not one of the Fathers surpassed Clement in width of reading or in the candour of an inquiring mind. With Greek poetry, epic, lyrical, tragic, and comic, he was thoroughly familiar, and hardly less so with Greek philosophy. The names of the authors from whom he quotes occupy fourteen pages in the *Bibliographia Graeca* of Fabricius. In his search for truth he had also studied the writings of the principal heretics, and endeavoured to understand them. He had read various apocryphal gospels and other Christian forgeries. He was so well acquainted with Scripture that he quotes from every book of the Old Testament except Ruth and Canticles, and from every book of the New except

[1] Eusebius (*H. E.* v. 10) says that Pantaenus had leanings to Stoicism. So too Jer. *Cat.* 36.

[2] He wrote *The Tutor* after his appointment (*Paed.* i. 6, p. 99).

[3] Euseb. vi. 11, Jer. *Cat.* 38, *Ep.* 84.

[4] Eusebius (*Praep. Ev.* ii. 2) calls him πάντων διὰ πείρας ἐλθὼν ἀνήρ.

James, Philemon, and the Second Epistle of St. Peter. Criticism had not in his days made any clear distinctions between canonical and uncanonical books, so that he also quotes as Scripture the Pastor of Hermas, the Books of Tobias, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus, and the Epistles of Barnabas and Clement of Rome. The total number of passages quoted by him from Pagans, Christians, and heretics, amounts to many hundreds, and these quotations would alone make his books a precious storehouse of ancient thought. If he was uncritical in his acceptance of what he read, he only shares the limitation which was common to all the writers of his day.

In A.D. 202 there broke out in Alexandria the persecution of Septimius Severus, during which perished Potamiaena, and Leonides, the father of Origen. The decree issued by the Emperor forbade all conversions to Judaism or Christianity, and the effects of the edict were felt with special severity in Egypt because the Emperor had recently visited the country. The history of the persecution at Alexandria, as at other places, is full of strange anomalies; for while we are told that the cruel Praefect Laetus haled victims from all parts of Egypt, *all* of whom were certainly not catechumens, he left some Christians unmolested, who, like Origen, continued to win over fresh converts from Paganism, and who, by visiting the martyrs and encouraging them up to the very moment of their death, openly proclaimed their Christian faith.

Origen's youth—for he was but a boy of fifteen—may perhaps account for his scathelessness, but certainly if any Christian, not being a fresh convert, would be in conspicuous peril, it would be the head of the Catechetical School—especially when this was a man so well

known as Clement, and one who had himself been a convert from the heathenism of which he was now a formidable adversary. Clement was one of those who took the common-sense view of a Christian's duty under such circumstances, and his opinion was doubtless rendered sacred by the plain counsel of our Lord. It was true that teachers like Tertullian had their sophistical gloss by which they could prove the necessity of being more righteous than the Lord's counsel demanded; but Clement, like Dionysius of Alexandria, Athanasius, Cyprian, and other great Fathers, thought it his duty to retire before the storm. As we do not know the exact conditions of the problem, we cannot in any way criticise his conduct. This much only is clear:—when the presence of a bishop or teacher was indispensable to preserve the faithfulness and console the sufferings of his flock, then none but a hireling would flee because he saw the wolf coming. But when, on the other hand, to await the persecutor meant certain death and the cutting short of an activity not only beneficent but even essential to the welfare of the Church, then it became a vainglorious presumption to clutch prematurely at the martyr's crown.

Clement left Alexandria, perhaps never to return. From this time his presidency of the school ceased, and we only catch sight of him in dim and uncertain glimpses. In all probability he had private resources, and he spent his time in travelling, learning, and writing.[1] It is inferred from an allusion in Eusebius that he visited Syria. He certainly visited Cappadocia, in which his former pupil Alexander, afterwards Bishop of Jerusalem, then filled the unimportant bishopric of a town called Flaviades. Alexander was in prison during the

[1] Euseb. vi. 13.

persecution of Severus (A.D. 204), and also in the reign of Caracalla (A.D. 211). When Asclepiades was chosen Bishop of Antioch, Alexander wrote a letter to the Church of that city to offer his congratulations on the choice of so worthy a confessor. The bearer of this letter was Clement, of whom Alexander speaks as "Clement the blessed presbyter, who has become my lord, and done me benefit,"[1] and whose society he regards as a special providence.[2] Clearly, therefore, the great Alexandrian teacher was not ashamed of the bishop's chain, and his retirement from Alexandria could not have been the result either of cowardice or of any coldness in the profession of his Christian faith. In a later letter, to Origen, Alexander mentions Pantaenus and Clement as "blessed fathers who guided us on our way, and with whom we soon shall be."[3]

We hear no further particulars respecting him. His informal canonisation procured him a place on December 4 in the early Western martyrologies; but his name was omitted from the calendar by Clement VIII. (1592-1600), and in 1748 Pope Benedict XIV., in a letter to John V. king of Portugal, refused to restore it. He urged, and with perfect truth, that some of Clement's teaching was open to suspicion. Such a reflexion would indeed be hardly justified by any of Clement's extant work; but it is possible that his *Outlines* contained more dubious matter.[4] Eusebius indeed praises the book; but it was misunderstood, and sentiments were attributed to Clement which were perhaps

[1] Euseb. vi. 11.

[2] Jerome quotes this letter, *Catal.* "Haec vobis . . . transmisi per Clementem, virum illustrem et probatum, quem vos quoque scitis . . . qui, quum huc venisset *juxta providentiam et visitationem Dei*, confirmavit et auxit Domini Ecclesiam."

[3] Euseb. vi. 14

[4] Yet our first authority for this is Photius (*Cod.* 109-111).

only quoted by him from the Gnostic writers whom he intended to refute.

Works of Clement On the Passover, On Fasting, On Evil Speaking, On Steadfastness (addressed to those recently baptized), and On the Ecclesiastical Canons, have perished, either entirely, or in all but a few fragments; and he either never wrote the books On First Principles, On Prophecy, On Marriage, On the Resurrection, and others which he seems to promise,[1] or possibly the allusions which he makes are to sections of his existing works. We have nothing but fragments of his *Outlines*. But three works of the utmost importance—the "Exhortation to the Gentiles," the Tutor ("Paedagogus"), the Miscellanies ("Stromateis"), and the tract "Who is the Rich Man who is Saved?"—are preserved almost entire, and are of the utmost importance for the history of Christian theology.

The grandeur of the aim which Clement set before him shows the power and originality of his mind. His range was nothing short of encyclopaedic. He aimed at the complete training of the true Gnostic; in other words, the perfect and enlightened Christian. The three great extant works and the lost *Outlines* were all devoted to this end. He was familiar with the three stages of philosophic training—the Purification (*ἀποκάθαρσις*); the Initiation (*μίμησις καὶ κατήχησις*); and the Vision (*ἐποπτεία*); and he desired to furnish something of the same Pythagorean course for the Christian philosopher.[2] In the *Exhortation* Christians are purged of heathen error; in *The Tutor*

[1] *Strom.* iii. 13, iv. 2, 92, 93; *Paed.* i. 6, iii. 8.

[2] "Itaque quemadmodum in multis, etiam in ordine, Πυθαγόρειος καὶ μυστηριώδης est Clemens."—Potter, i. p. 1.

they are initiated; in the *Miscellanies* they are admitted to the contemplation of the Eternal God. The first treatise was for the unconverted; the second for neophytes; the third is for the strong, who were to be trained to still more perfect knowledge in the *Outlines*.

It is Clement himself who, at the beginning of *The Tutor*, gives us a sketch of his design. Three things have to be considered, he says, with reference to man—his habits, his actions, and his passions. The *Exhortation* was devoted, therefore, to the training of the habits; it was to be the basis of the faith, as the keel is of the ship. In it we are led rejoicingly to abjure our old opinions and to grow young for salvation, joining in the prophetic hymn, "How good is God to Israel, even to them that are of a right heart."[1] *The Tutor* is addressed by way of precept to the training of actions; and the *Miscellanies*, which are persuasive, are intended for the healing of the passions. He therefore describes the three books as being respectively hortatory, preceptive, and persuasive. They are intended first to exhort and counsel, next to train and strengthen, finally to heal and teach. But one and the self-same Word speaks throughout the three.[2]

The plan then of Clement was magnificent and fruitful. "The execution of the work," says Professor Westcott, "if it falls short of the design, is still full of precious lessons. And when it is frankly admitted that the style of Clement is generally deficient in terseness and elegance; that his method is desultory; that his learning is undigested; we can still thankfully admire his richness of information, his breadth of reading, his largeness of sympathy, his lofty aspirations, his

[1] Ps. lxxiii. 1. [2] *Paed.* i. 1.

noble conception of the office and capacities of the faith."

The *Exhortation to the Greeks*,[1] written about A.D. 190, was meant to help candid speculators who still felt the perplexities from which Clement had been delivered. It is a noble and eloquent book. He begins with the fables of Amphion, Arion, and Orpheus, who built cities and tamed wild beasts and trees and dolphins by their minstrelsy; and of Eunomus, the place of whose broken string was supplied by the cicala which sat on his lyre. He tells the Greeks that they believed such fables, but he would fain bring for them Truth out of heaven to the Holy Mount of God, with Wisdom in all her brightness, and the sacred prophetic choir. "And let Truth, beaming forth her far-darting radiance, illumine on every side those who are rolling in darkness, and let her rid men of their wandering, stretching forth her supreme right hand—namely Understanding—for their salvation. And uprising, and uplifting their eyes, let them abandon Helicon and Cithaeron, and dwell in Sion—'For out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,'[2] the celestial Word, the true Agonistes, crowned on the stage of the whole universe." Far different from the songs of the old Pagan minstrels was this song which came to loose men speedily from the bitter tyranny of demons, to lead them to holiness, to recall them to heaven, to tame the passions of men, which are more intractable than those of wild beasts. It is not the music of Jubal, but of David, and of Him who was before David the Word of God—Who, despising the lyre and harp, which are but lifeless instruments, has, by the Holy Spirit, tuned the Universe and especially the microcosm of man. He

[1] Λόγος προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας. [2] Is. ii. 3.

makes melody to God on this instrument of many tones. Here Clement quotes apparently from some old Christian hymn, in which Christ says to the soul,

"Thou art my harp, and flute, and temple;"—

a harp for harmony, a flute for the breathing of the Spirit, a temple because of the indwelling Word, so that the first may sound, the second breathe, the third contain the Lord.[1] And the song of salvation, if in one sense new, is in another sense before the foundation of the world, seeing that we were, through the Word, in the beginning. He speaks to us now, not by signs and wonders, but by Himself, made man. Shall we slight the benefit and spurn the proffered salvation?

Clement then proceeds, in a way familiar to the Christian apologists, to expose and denounce the myths, the games, the mysteries, oracles, and sacrifices of the Pagans. He taunts them with the arguments of Euhemeros, that the gods were only deified dead men, whose very tombs were shown, and whose flagitiousness was notorious (ch. 2, 3). In a style resembling that of the Book of Wisdom, he denounces the folly of idol-worship. "The Parian stone is beautiful, but is not Neptune; the ivory is beautiful, but is not Olympian Zeus. Matter stands in need of Art, but God needs nothing." The true images of God, the living statues, are men (ch. 4). He next examines the varying opinions of the philosophers and poets about the gods, and he points out their errors while he admits that they have approached, and, in the case of Plato, have almost touched the truth (ch. 5-7). After passing to the Sibyl and the Prophets (ch. 8), he points out the sin of neglecting the heavenly call. "Hear ye who are afar off, and ye who are near. The Word is concealed

[1] Comp. *Strom.* vii. 708 (ed. Potter).

from no one. He is a common light; He shines on all; there is no darkness in the world. Let us hasten to salvation, let us hasten to the Regeneration" (ch. 9).

But the heathen found a difficulty in abandoning immemorial beliefs and ancient customs for a faith of yesterday. Clement combats this objection by pointing out that it is always right to abandon the worse for the better, and to turn from death to life, when custom could be proved to be blind and wicked. "Believe then, O man, in man and God; believe, O man, in Him who suffered and is adored, the Living God. Believe . . and your soul shall receive life." The rapid progress of the faith attests its divine origin. "The Divine power, shining upon the earth, has, with celerity not to be surpassed, and affable benevolence, filled the Universe with the seed of salvation. For without the Providence of God, the Lord could not have accomplished so great a work in so short a time. . . . He caused God to shine upon us, proving whence He was and who He was, by what He taught and did—the Bearer of Peace—the Reconciler—the Word our Saviour—a fountain giving life and peace poured out over the whole face of the earth—through whom, so to speak, the Universe has become a seed of blessings" (ch. 10).

The eleventh chapter sets forth with almost dithyrambic fervour the divine blessings involved in the Incarnation. He allegorises the Fall by saying that the serpent represents pleasure; and after singing, as it were, a paean to the sleepless light which has now flowed over all men, he appeals to men to receive the light of Life, to listen to the trumpet of Christ, which is His Gospel, to set themselves in array in the bloodless army, and to become imitators of God in holy and self-denying lives.

The last chapter is an appeal to abandon the Charybdis and the Sirens of custom and the orgies of self-indulgence. "Come, O madman, not leaning on the thyrsus, not crowned with ivy; throw away the *mitra*, throw away the fawnskin; come to thy senses. This is no Cithaeron but the mount of God. It is not the Maenads, the sisters of Semele, who rage and revel here, but the daughters of God, the fair lambs, who celebrate the holy rites of the word. The righteous are the chorus; the music is a hymn of the King of the Universe. The maidens strike the lyre, the Angels praise, the Prophets speak; the sound of the music floats forth, and at full speed they who have been called pursue the jubilant band, longing to receive the Father. O mysteries truly sacred! O stainless light, I am lighted by torches on my way, enjoying the vision of heaven and God! I become holy by initiation. The Lord is the Hierophant, who illuminates and seals the initiated, and places him who has believed by His Father's side, to be preserved for ever. These are the orgies of my mysteries. If thou wilt, be thou also initiated, and thou shalt join in the same with the angels around the uncreated, the imperishable, the only true God, while the Word of God joins in our strain. He, the eternal Jesus, the one great High Priest, the one God and Father, prays for and exhorts men. 'Here,' He says, 'ye innumerable tribes, or rather all who are endowed with reason, come to me to be arrayed under one God and the one Word of God. Let us haste, let us run, my fellowmen, who are God-loving and God-like images of the Word. Let us haste, let us run, let us take His yoke, let us receive the good charioteer of men, that He may conduct us to immortality. Let us love Christ. Let us aspire after what is good— the Helper is the Word; let us put con-

fidence in Him. For us, even us, He has adopted. He wishes to be called the Father of us alone. Such, then, is our position who are the adherents of Christ—

> "'As are men's wishes, such too are their words;
> And as their words, such also are their deeds;
> And as their deeds are, such too is their life.'

Excellent (*chrestos*) is the whole life of men who have known Christ.[1] To you it still remains to choose which will profit you most—judgment or grace. Is it even possible to doubt which is the better? Can life be compared with destruction?"

So ends the *Exhortation*—a very noble appeal, though imperfect, as all human work is. It is not, of course, a systematic exposition either of the truths or the evidences of Christianity; it would have little effect on the unbelievers of to-day. But it was admirably suited for the needs of the time in which Clement wrote, and could hardly fail to bring home to those who read it in the right spirit the incomparable superiority of Christianity to a corrupt and unintelligible heathenism which could only urge the plea of prescription, and which yet was, in comparison with the fundamental revelation, a thing but of yesterday. No doubt there are in this treatise "errors in taste, in fact, in argument." The taste of Clement's day differed widely from that of our own, and permitted allusions and descriptions which would now be banished. Clement's insight into the origin of mythology could not but be defective, seeing that in our own age the subject is only beginning to be understood.[2] And dialectics are not his forte. But the book

[1] The familiar Christian play on two words of identical pronunciation—*chrestos* "excellent," and *Christos* "Christ"—which we find even in the New Testament. Comp. 1 Pet. ii. 3, If so be that ye have known that the Lord is χρηστός, *i.e.* "gracious" and "Christ."

[2] *Exhort.* 7 (ed. Potter, p. 64).

abounds in noble eloquence and majestic appeal. It is enriched by a large sympathy, which recognised the reality while it pointed out the limitations of ethnic inspiration. Clement, while he sees that the Word is the true sun of the soul, which enlightens the eye of the understanding, says that the Greeks had spoken some fragments (ὀλίγ' ἄττα) of the truth, and had received some sparks of the Divine Word. Above all, the book is great from its clear and transcendent insight into the doctrine of the Incarnation as the central truth of the Christian system—the source of the true and sole glory of humanity, the basis of all man's hopes, the explanation of his perplexities, and the revelation of his final destiny. It is this belief which gives eagle wings to the eloquence of Clement, and places him in the forefront of Christian teachers. His true theme is the glory of the Word, as the restorer of fallen manhood, the source of all purifying and sanctifying influence, the source of every motive towards well-doing. "This," says Bishop Kaye, "may be said to be neither a systematic nor a complete, but it cannot justly be called a low or unworthy view of the Gospel dispensation. It gives birth to lofty and exalted notions of the purposes of our being; it is indeed an expansion of our Lord's blessed inspiration, Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."[1]

It will be unnecessary to dwell at equal length on Clement's second book—*The Tutor*,[2] written before A.D. 195. He describes its scope in the opening chapter, and in the *Miscellanies*.[3] "Now the weak," he says, "'eateth herbs' according to the noble Apostle. *The Tutor*, divided by us into three books, has already exhibited the training and nurture from the state of childhood upwards,

[1] *Clem. of Alexandria*, p. 41. [2] ὁ Παιδαγωγός. [3] *Strom.* vi. 1.

that is the course of life which, from elementary instruction, grows by faith; and for those who are just grown to manhood prepares the soul, endued with virtue, for the reception of true knowledge."[1] It is meant to be mainly practical. He had already pointed out that while heathen philosophy deals with special precepts Christianity directs the whole springs of action to one object—the attainment of everlasting life. Yet he thought it necessary to fill up the large outlines of the Christian character, and to lay down rules for the guidance of daily life, in order that knowledge may, in due course, arise out of action. The first book sets forth who "the Tutor" is—even the Divine Word himself, who makes an education of all our life—(1) it shows how He deals with our sins; (2) His great mercy; (3) and His education of women no less than men.[2] It proceeds to show who are the sons whom the Tutor educates[3]—even all who walk according to truth (ch. 5-6);[4] and then explains the methods and principles of His instruction alike in their benignity and their severity, the object being to train the reason to virtue (ch. 7-13).[5]

The second and third books are intended to teach on a scriptural basis the discipline, even in minute regula-

[1] *Exhort.* 11.

[2] To dwell on this truth was a characteristic necessity of the times, and a special glory of Christianity.

[3] The Gnostics applied the word "children" only to rudimentary Christians, and this view he combats.

[4] The learned physiological digression about milk (1 Cor. iii. 2) is characteristic of Clement's undigested reading and desultory style.

[5] He here has an opportunity to refute the Gnostic error which taught that the God of threatening and chastisement in the Old Testament could not be the God of mercy and goodness in the New. His views on this subject are just and profound. Punishment is a sign not of real wrath but of disciplinary goodness. In ch. 13 he uses Stoic phrases, and says that as heathen philosophers have written adequately of life in general, he will proceed to deal with the rules of a *good* life.

tions, of a Christian's life. He gives rules about eating and drinking, and costly vessels, and conduct at banquets (ch. 1-4); on laughter and loose conversation (ch. 5, 6); on social intercourse, unguents, crowns, sleep, and married life (ch. 7-10); on clothes, shoes, and gold ornaments (ch. 11-13). In the third book, after a brief disquisition on the elements of true beauty (ch. 1), he proceeds to speak of personal adornments, of companionship, of the baths, of true riches and the right use of wealth, of parabolic instruction, of gymnastics and exercise (ch. 2-10); he then gives a sketch of the befitting Christian life,[1] as regards ear-rings, rings, the hair, painting the face, and walking, and he quotes Zeno of Citium's description of the model maiden. He adds remarks about amusements, companions, public spectacles, everyday religion, conduct in and out of church, love, the kiss of peace, the restraint of the eyes (ch. 11). After quoting texts from Scripture in confirmation of his advice, he ends with a prayer to the Divine Tutor. Two hymns are subjoined—one to Christ the Saviour, and one to the Tutor. They are interesting and beautiful, but probably belong to a later age.[2]

It will be seen at once that the interest of the first book of *The Tutor* is of a wholly different character

[1] Ἐπιδρομὴ κεφαλαιώδης τοῦ ἀρίστου βίου.

[2] It is in the former that we find the beautiful and famous lines—

> "ἁλιεῦ μερόπων τῶν σωζομένων
> πελάγους κακίας
> ἰχθῦς ἄγνους
> κύματος ἐχθροῦ
> γλυκερῇ ζωῇ δελεάζων."

"Oh, fisher of those mortals who are saved, luring with sweet life the pure fish of the hateful wave of the sea of wickedness." We see from *Paed.* iii. 11, that Clement was familiar with the early emblem of the fish. He there speaks of a fisher being engraved on the ring of a Christian who "will remember the Apostle, and the children drawn out of the water."

from that of the other two. The first book is a grand picture of Christ the Word as the Educator of all human life—our spotless Exemplar who bears the infirmities of man—as God forgiving his sins, as Man disciplining him that he may not sin. For man was created to display God's goodness, and to attain to the knowledge of God, for which reason we must love Him, and by walking after His precepts rise from His image into His likeness. How beautiful, for instance, and how tender are such passages as these,[1] "They who are sick need a Saviour; they who have wandered a guide; they who are blind One who shall lead them to the light; they who thirst the living fountain of which he who partakes shall thirst no more; the dead need life; the sheep a shepherd; children a tutor; all mankind need Jesus." Or this: "On this account the Word is called the Saviour; He devises remedies to bring man to a healthy sense, and to salvation, watching favourable opportunities, detecting lurking mischief, laying open the causes of the affections, cutting up the roots of irrational desires, admonishing man from what he ought to abstain; furnishing every kind of antidote in order to save them who are diseased. *For to save man is the greatest and most royal work of God.*" [2]

The second and third books are quite different. They descend to rules of common good breeding, such as not to drink with the mouth full, and they furnish rules of etiquette, dietary, and dress. "We have only to compare Clement with St. Paul to be convinced of the superiority of that mode of instruction which lays down general principles, and leaves them to be applied by the discretion and conscience of each individual, to that which professes to regulate every single action, and by

[1] *Paed.* ii. 9. [2] Id. i. 12.

its minuteness becomes burdensome and ridiculous." On the other hand, we must not forget that many of Clement's rules would be valuable to men but little trained in the high courtesies of Christian life, and who were barely delivered from the slough of vulgar heathendom. And these chapters have a vivid historical interest. They furnish us with a minute picture of the common life of the third century in Alexandria—a picture of unsuspected fidelity, and untinged by the insincerities and exaggerations of the satirists or the declaimers. Clement's caustic sketches of the glutton, and the dandy, and the painted, perfumed, bewigged, and bejewelled lady of fashion; his recommendations of simple diet and healthy exercise; his denunciation of a worldly and corrupt society, have an interest analogous to that which we derive from the letters of St. Jerome, and the sermons of St. Chrysostom on social abuses. He had no intention of writing a treatise on ethics. That task had been performed by Aristotle in a manner beyond his reach. He is not laying the foundations of morals, but building the superstructure of daily conduct. If we judge *The Tutor* from the standpoint of the writer, and of the exigencies of those for whom he wrote, we shall be unjust if we deny its value as a code of Christian morals and manners adapted for times when converts were won from "the all but incredible licentiousness and luxury with which society around was incurably tainted." The book thus possesses an interest and value which lie entirely apart from its main intention.

The third great book in which Clement carried out his large design was that called *The Miscellanies*, often called by the Greek title *Stromata*, or more correctly *Stromateis*, from which he himself is called by Theo-

doret *The Stromateus.*[1] Pollux defines the word *Stromateus* to mean "*a bag* for holding patchwork or bedquilts," but the word was also used for the various contents of the bag.[2] Hence Athenaeus tells us of a fish which was called *Stromateus* from the golden stripes which variegated its back. Clement often alludes to the title and nature of the treatise. He ends the first book with the words, "But at this point let our first 'Miscellany' of Gnostic notes according to the true philosophy be closed." He alludes to the multitude of matters[3] of which he is treating, and says, "Let these notes of ours, as we often remarked for the sake of those who approach them rashly and unskilfully, be various in character, woven together as the name itself implies, passing continuously from one thing to another, and in the series of the discussions indicating one thing and demonstrating another. . . . The miscellanies of notes contribute to the remembrance and clear statement of truth to him who is able to investigate with reason. Thus the miscellanies of notes have their appropriate title, exactly like that ancient oblation culled from all sorts of things about which Sophocles writes—

> "There was a fleece of a sheep, and a libation
> Of vines, and well-stored grape cluster,
> And mixed therewith was fruit of all kinds
> And the fatness of the olive, and the most intricate
> Wax-modelled structure of the yellow bee."

After quoting similar passages, he adds: "We must then often, as in winnowing, shake and toss up this great mixture of seeds in order to separate the wheat."

[1] Theod. *Haer.* i. μάρτυρα τὸν Στρωματέα παρέξομαι Κλήμεντα.

[2] ποίκιλα διεστρωμένα. Similar collections were sometimes called by the name κεστός, "an embroidered girdle," and are really *omniana.*

[3] *Strom.* iv. 1. He speaks of his book as a προσφορὰ ἀπηνθισμένη. The Romans would have called it *lanx satura.*

Again, in the first chapter of the sixth book, he says: "In a meadow the flowers blooming variously, and in a park the plantations of fruit-trees, are not separated according to their species from those of other kinds. If some, culling varieties, have composed learned collections, 'meadows,' and 'helicons,' and 'honeycombs,' and 'robes,' then with the things that come to recollection by haphazard, and are expurgated neither in order nor expression, but purposely scattered, the form of the miscellanies is promiscuously variegated like a meadow. And such being the case, the notes shall serve to myself as kindling sparks (ζώπυρα); and if a man fit for knowledge chance to fall in with them, careful research will turn out to his benefit and advantage."

This method is peculiarly well suited to a writer of multifarious reading like Clement, who was at the same time lacking in that "masterly and architectonic skill" which knows how to systematise and unify the materials which it possesses. Plutarch is said to have written *Stromateis*, as did Origen; and in later times we have had books like Bishop Berkeley's on Tar-water, ranging from Tar-water to the Trinity, and Southey's *Doctor*. But though Clement hardly possessed what Coleridge calls the "esemplastic" power by which the imagination moulds many things into one, his aim was definite. It was to prove the all-sufficiency of the Gospel to satisfy the needs of the Christian philosopher.[1] He modestly attributes the chief merit of his work to his teachers, but he omits much, and has forgotten much that he learnt from them. He "does

[1] The width of his scope may best be seen in *Strom.* iv. 1, where he implies doubts whether he shall be able to finish the entire scheme, which included physics as well as theology.

not profess to teach secret things sufficiently, but only to recall them to memory. Some things my treatise will hint, on some it will linger, some it will merely mention. It will try to speak imperceptibly, to exhibit secretly, to demonstrate silently. One book will not shrink from making use of what is best in philosophy and other preparatory instruction. Let a man milk the sheep's milk if he need sustenance; let him shear the wool if he need clothing. And in this way let me produce the fruit of Greek erudition. But I shall show throughout the whole of these miscellanies that evil has an evil nature, and can never produce anything good, indicating that philosophy is in a sense a work of Divine Providence."[1] He regarded his work as a book of commentaries on the true Gnostic philosophy, and is not afraid, he says, to make much use of Greek philosophy, which, so far from being, as some Christians thought, an invention of the Evil One, contains truth concealed within it like the kernel of a nut in its husk. He is an avowed eclectic, but an enemy of sophistry. He thinks that the philosophers attained some germs of truth, but he occupies a great part of the first book in the endeavour to prove that the Greeks were but children in comparison with the Hebrews, seeing that they belong to a later epoch of history. He also adopts and defends at length the unfortunate and baseless hypothesis, in which he had been preceded by Philo and Justin Martyr, that all which was best in Greek knowledge was a plagiarism by the Greeks from the Hebrews, and that Plato was an imitator of Moses, the principles of whose legislation he endeavours to explain. In the attempt to sustain this thesis Clement fails to rely as much as he should have done on the truth of the divine education of mankind

[1] *Strom.* i. 1.

and on the sufficiency of the Inspiring Word to account for all the broken gleams of human knowledge and revelation, whether found among Christians or among the heathen.

The second book, with various digressions, pursues the same theme, and also explains the nature of faith and the way in which man can become like God. It closes with some remarks on the true doctrine of marriage, to which subject the whole of the third book is devoted, it being his aim to refute from Scripture and reason the antagonistic errors of Antinomian license and ascetic disparagement of the married state. The fourth book gives pictures of the true Gnostic, with the elements of self-sacrifice, martyrdom, love, and endurance, which lie at the base of his character, and elevate him Godwards. It also gives an ideal sketch of holy womanhood. In the fifth book, after speaking of faith and hope, he dwells on the value and significance of symbolic teaching, necessitating effort; and once more tries to show that the Greeks owe their morality, inferior as it is, to plagiarism from the Jews. The sixth and seventh books set forth the Gnostic as the sole true worshipper of God, and the sole true philosopher whose effort it is to grow like the Son of God. Clement says he has set forth a statue of the Gnostic.[1] Heretics in vain claimed the glory of true Christian Gnosis, failing both, because their teaching was an innovation and because it

[1] But, as Bishop Kaye (p. 259) complains, "far from having made a statue, he has not even completed a single part or member; the most that can be said is that in his rambling and desultory work may be found the materials out of which a statue may be made." He thinks that Clement often became indistinct from mingling the heathen-philosophic with the Christian-spiritual elements of the conception, and that he does not sufficiently point out the connection between contemplative and active religion —the neglect of which is the error of the mystic.

was opposed to the witness of Scripture. It is uncertain whether there was an eighth book. At the close of the seventh, Clement proposes to make a new start. "After this seventh our Miscellany shall enter on the subsequent consideration from a new beginning." This perhaps alludes to his next treatise, the *Outlines*. At any rate, the work which passes as the eighth book of the *Stromateis* is the fragment of a treatise on logic, perhaps meant as a preliminary introduction to the examination of various schools of philosophy and heresy. Photius points out that neither in title nor in subject does it agree with the other seven.

No brief sketch can give any real indication of the contents of this discursive treatise, which, apart from its high intrinsic value, abounds in interesting quotations from classical and heretical authors, and works which are no longer extant. It is full of curious information on all kinds of subjects. Its science, its philology, its exegesis, do not rise much above the level of the times in which it was written. Its quotations from Scripture are often loose and from memory, although in some instances they retain traces of a valuable reading. The work is a "*rudis indigestaque moles*" of multifarious learning. This method of teaching suited the unsystematic style of the writer. He published the book before he left Alexandria, about A.D. 202. After that time he lost the advantage—which was indispensable to such a work—of having access to the rich library which was the glory of Alexandria. But the glory of this, and his other works, is their central conception,—the Word, the Divine Logos, the Son of God as the Converter, the Teacher, the Perfecter of the Race of Man. Thus salvation becomes a present deliverance from sin; recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image

of God in righteousness and true holiness. Faith implies knowledge, "therefore salvation by faith is only, in other words, the love of God by the knowledge of God, or the true recovery of the image of God by a true spiritual acquaintance with Him."[1]

The task which Clement had set before himself was completed in the *Outlines*, or *Hypotyposes*, called in Latin *Adumbrationes*. It was translated into Latin by Cassiodorus, with modifications like those which Rufinus introduced into the writings of Origen. It was completed in eight books, of which only fragments are preserved. According to Photius, it consisted of interpretations of Genesis, Exodus, the Psalms, St. Paul's Epistles, the Catholic Epistles, and Ecclesiasticus. He says that with some truths it mixed many things impious and fabulous (*μάταια καὶ βλάσφημα*); represented Matter as eternal; the Son as a created being; said that there were many worlds before Adam; gave an obscene and unscriptural account of the origin of Eve; taught that the Word only became flesh in semblance; and asserted the existence of two Words, of which the second, who appeared to men, was a mere emanation.[2] Now Photius himself doubts whether Clement ever wrote such things and attempted to prove them from Scripture; and he admits that his other writings contain no such heresies. Jerome, in his letter to Magnus, praises the *Outlines*. Now he certainly could not have done so if it contained such perilous stuff, which, as Rufinus says, is impossible in a writer "*tam in omnibus catholico*." Those who love and admire this great Church teacher may safely, and a little indignantly, reject the blind and blundering

[1] Wesley. The passage closely resembles *Strom.* vii. 10 (ed. Potter p. 864); Kaye, p. 215.

[2] *παντελῶς εἰς ἀσεβεῖς καὶ μυθωδεῖς λόγους ἐκφέρεται.*

notice of this ninth century bibliographer.[1] We may regard it as certain either that the work had been (as Rufinus asserts) interpolated—a common fate with the writings of that day—or that Photius, scanning it in a perfunctory way, mistook for Clement's own statements the quotations which he made from heretics. Eusebius tells us that the work gave an account of the books of Scripture, including both in the Old and New Testaments some which are Apocryphal, such as the Epistle of Barnabas, the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Traditions of Matthias, and the Revelation of Peter.[2] It is uncertain whether the extant summaries from Theodotus, a confused compilation of extracts from Valentinian sources, belonged to this work;[3] or the no less desultory "Prophetic Selections;" or the Latin version of notes on 1 Peter, Jude, 1-2 John. In any case they are too fragmentary and unintelligible to be of much service.

Another extant work of Clement is the tract "Who is the Rich Man who is Saved?"[4] a sort of sermon on Mark x. 17-31. One of its chief objects is to show that the command to "sell all that thou hast" was not intended by Christ to be universally applicable. It is a simple and eloquent sermon, and ends with the beautiful and famous "story which is no story" of St. John and the young robber, which is a precious tradition of the later days of the Evangelist.

But our high esteem for this learned and genial teacher, and our conviction of his substantive orthodoxy, must not prevent us from pointing out some of his limitations.

[1] *Cod.* 109-111.

[2] See *Strom.* ii. 6, 7, 15-18, etc.; vi. 5, 13, 15, etc. See Lardner, *Credibility*, ii. 22, sec. 13. Kaye, p. 373.

[3] It is cited as the eighth book of the Miscellanies by Acacius of Caesarea and John of Damascus.

[4] Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος;

1. He was unsystematic. He gives us not so much a theology as the fragmentary and fruitful germs of a theology. Thoughts of exceeding preciousness lie scattered throughout his works, but they are not always homogeneous, nor are they elaborated into a definite and coherent system. Perhaps this is a merit in one point of view, if it be a defect in another.

2. Clement appeals constantly to an unwritten tradition committed by the Lord to four Apostles, and handed down by them to "the elders."[1] This constitutes a *disciplina arcani*, which he shrinks from entirely setting forth in writing, because it might be like a sword in the hand of a child; and he erroneously infers from various passages in St. Paul that this was not to be made known to all believers,[2] but furnishes strong meat and perfect insight (ἡ ἐποπτικὴ θεωρία) to the true Gnostic. This tradition helped to constitute an ecclesiastical rule (κανών), "a rule of truth," which did not indeed furnish new doctrines, but guided the true Gnostic to the apprehension of them.

What was this wonderful "tradition" and "rule"? If it mainly insisted on the homogeneity of revelation and on the truth that "the Old Testament is not" (as so many heretics asserted) "contrary to the New, for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ," it was so far good and of vital importance.[3] But in that case it was neither new nor was there any excuse for concealing it from

[1] *Strom.* i. 4, sec. 11, and *passim.* Euseb. *H. E.* ii. 1.

[2] For the chief passages bearing on this tradition, see *Strom.* i. 1, vi. 1, 7, 9, 15 (Potter, i. 312, ii. 736, 771, 775, 803, etc.)

[3] We infer that it was something of this kind that he meant from *Strom.* vi. 15. If the book of Clement on the Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Κανών had come down to us we should have a clearer conception of what he meant. Rufinus describes it as "de his qui Judaicum sensum in Scripturis sequuntur," and Eusebius as πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαΐζοντας.

any one. There was an error and a dangerous evil in attempting to draw any distinction between the religion of the vulgar and the religion of the initiated, as though an ordinary amount of knowledge sufficed the former, while something different, secret, and superfine was needed for the latter. So far as Clement used language which seems to lend any sanction to such an hypothesis, so far he lent countenance to a tenet which became a fatal source of spiritual pride and usurping tyranny.

But when we closely scan the somewhat vague and mysterious references of Clement, his "tradition" seems ultimately to be nothing more than the application to Scripture of that allegorical method which he received from Pantaenus, as Pantaenus had probably learnt it from the writings of Philo, and as Philo and his teachers had borrowed it from the Stoic method of interpreting Homer. So far as we may judge from Clement himself, the method was absolutely valueless. It did not even furnish any criterion by which he could draw a deep line of distinction between the Scriptures and apocryphal writings;[1] and when he came to apply it practically, the results to which it led him were untenable and even absurd. Clement's Gnostic was supposed to be able to interpret Scripture in a higher and more "spiritual" way than the ordinary believer. The Scriptures were the common possession of all Christians, but the *illuminati* of orthodox Gnosticism were supposed to read in them meanings undiscernible to the vulgar eye. In point of fact the allegorical evolution of a so-called "spiritual" interpretation was so far from being a valuable method, that it became the favourite camping

[1] Clement quotes from Esdras, the Preaching of Peter, the Revelation of Peter, the "Apostle" Clement of Rome, the "Apostle" Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

ground of all heretics, and the least assailable bulwark of their manifold aberrations. Clement's "traditional" exegesis led him to such views as that Sarah's laughter was only due to bashfulness, not to credulity;[1] that Lot's wife was an allegory intended to salt (ἀρτύσαι) those who have a spiritual understanding;[2] that the three days of Abraham's journey typify sight, desire, and discernment;[3] that the "wine" in Gen. xlix. 11 is a reference to the blood of Christ;[4] that Joseph's coat of many colours means his varied knowledge;[5] that the two tables signify the heaven and the earth; that sun, moon, stars, clouds, light—wind, water, air, darkness, fire—are the heavenly decalogue;[6] that in the verse "an omer is the tenth part of the three measures" (LXX. τῶν τρίων μέτρων)—for as usual he contents himself with the Septuagint—the "three measures" mean sensation, speech, and mind;[7] that Moses slew the Egyptian with a word;[8] that the rules about unclean meats were meant to teach frugality;[9] that the clean animals which divide the hoof and chew the cud signify the orthodox who steadfastly meditate on the law of God;[10] that Job's coming "naked from his mother's womb" meant his freedom from vice;[11] that the barley loaves of the miracle signify the Jew and the Gentile, and the fishes the Greek philosophy—one of them perhaps indicating "the encyclical course of instruction," and the other "the philosophy which is afterwards taught"[12]—and so forth. Of such explanations of Scripture we can only say that Clement is either directly borrowing from or imitating the fantastic and

[1] *Strom.* vi. 12; Potter, p. 290. [2] Id. ii. 14, p. 366.
[3] Id. v. 11. [4] *Paed.* i. 6, p. 126.
[5] *Strom.* iv. 5, p. 678. [6] Id. vi. 16, p. 807.
[7] Id. ii. 11, p. 455. [8] Id. i. 23, p. 413.
[9] *Paed.* ii. 1. [10] *Strom.* vii. 18. Comp. Iren. *Haer.* v. 8.
[11] Id. iv. 25, p. 636. [12] Id. vi. 11, p. 787.

overdrawn methods of Philo, and that his exegesis as such hardly rises above the level of that in the Epistle of Barnabas. I have already spoken largely on this subject in my Bampton Lectures. I will only add here that in the decisive rejection of such methods I do not stand alone. "To follow Clement through his allegorical interpretations," says Bishop Kaye, "would be a wearisome and unprofitable labour."

We must not, however, lose sight of the fact that in the then chaotic state of scriptural exegesis, and in an epoch of transition, it was essential to maintain that the letter of Scripture need not be, and must not be, interpreted in a crude material manner. This was the Judaic literalism against which Clement rightly protested and argued.[1] This truth at any rate lay beneath the errors and imperfections of exposition into which the Alexandrians were led. No other means were known to them of explaining the connexion between Judaism and Christianity, between the Old Dispensation and the New.

It is not in the sphere of Scriptural interpretation that Clement is great, but in his firm grasp of the doctrine of the Word, and of the glorious truths respecting the nature and destiny of man which result from the Incarnation of the Son of God. In that truth he finds the one sovereign explanation of all perplexities, the mystery which is full of all inspiration and all hope. In the light of that doctrine man as man is exalted "a little lower than God," and all minor differences between men are swept away—there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female, there is neither bond nor free. All life becomes an education, and that education is extended to all the nations of the world.

[1] See *Strom.* vii. 16. For further remarks on the exegesis of Clement I must be allowed to refer to *History of Interpretation*, pp. 183-187.

And when we turn to the ethics of Clement we see that their truer and larger basis made them incomparably superior to those of most of the Latin writers. He does not, like Tertullian, set celibacy above marriage, and see in marriage only "the legalised satisfaction of an animal instinct," but rather a necessity for the perfectionment of all purely human life.[1] He sees no merit in voluntary pauperism, but holds that the mind can be free and pure in wealth as in poverty. Martyrdom has in his eyes no intrinsic or mechanical efficacy; it is only a noble endurance and confession on behalf of Christ.

I cannot better close this sketch of the beloved Alexandrian than in the words of one who sympathises deeply with the best aspects of his teaching. "Towards this great unity of all science and all life, Clement himself strove; and by the influence of his writings he has kept alive in others the sense of the magnificent promises included in the teaching of St. Paul and St. John, which, by their very grandeur, are apt to escape apprehension. He affirmed once for all, upon the threshold of the new age, that Christianity is the heir of all past time and the interpreter of the future. Sixteen centuries have affirmed the truth of his principle, and left its application still fruitful."

It is no discredit to Clement that Baronius struck his name out of the list of saintly teachers. The Cardinal, like Pope Benedict XIV., was probably misled by Photius; and the general spirit of Clement's writings is larger and more liberal than is usually favoured by the Church of Rome. But all Christians may thank the Alexandrian teacher for the

[1] *Strom.* iii. 1, sec. 6; vii. 12.

general nobleness of his tone and for many valuable thoughts. Two great principles were fundamental with him — the creation, education, and redemption of the human race by the Divine Logos; and the thought of perfection in the true Gnostic.[1] He aimed, above all things, at the attainment of an intelligent faith,[2] and his writings helped in no small degree to weld faith and knowledge in the presentation of Christianity to thinking minds.

There are very few of the Christian Fathers whose fundamental conceptions are better suited to correct the narrowness, the rigidity, and the formalism of Latin theology. He views Christianity from the standpoint of humanity, not from the standpoint of party; he regards it as a life, not as an organisation; as a germinant principle of truth, not as a rigid deposit of formulae. He had to teach the Indwelling of God, the progressiveness and universality of revelation, the proof of Christ's manifestation, which is derived neither predominantly from prophecy nor from miracle, but from His living Presence, from His whole Being. In opposition to the school of Marcion he had to show that the Law, and in opposition to the school of Tertullian that Philosophy, were the work neither of the Demiurge nor of demons, but were parts of the "Evangelistic preparation," "a stepping-stone to the philosophy which is according to Christ," "a fragment (*σπαραγμός*) of eternal truth from the theology of the ever-living Word."[3] At the same time he had to show that neither the Ebionitic over-valuation of the Law nor the Gnostic over-valuation of

[1] See Jacobi (*Herzog*, ii. 271).

[2] *Strom.* ii. 11, *πίστις ἐπιστημονική*.

[3] Id. i. capp. 5, 13, 19; vi. 5, 8. See some good remarks in Prof. Allen's *Continuity of Christian Thought*, pp. 40 ff.

Philosophy were any longer tenable. Plato, in the Timaeus, had spoken of God as infinitely distant, but Clement had to restore the truth which St. Paul had taught at Athens, that He is not far from every one of us. It is his lofty and wholesome doctrine that man is made in the image of God; that man's will is free; that he is redeemed from sin by a divine education and a corrective discipline; that fear and punishment are but remedial instruments in man's training; that Justice is but another aspect of Perfect Love; that the physical world is good and not evil; that Christ is a Living not a Dead Christ; that all mankind form one great brotherhood in Him; that salvation is an ethical process, not an external reward; that the Atonement was not the pacification of wrath, but the revelation of God's Eternal Mercy. He taught further that the Church means all who are in Christ; that the sacraments are not magic talismans, but divinely-appointed and efficacious symbols; that God needs no sacrifice save the sacrifice of ourselves—"the Word breathing an incense from holy souls." That fasting is a moral abstinence, not a physical maceration; that marriage is no less sacred than celibacy; that "the altar which is with us here on earth is the congregation of those who devote themselves to prayer, having as it were one common voice and mind; that judgment is a continuous process, not a single sentence; that God works all things up to what is better"; that souls may be purified beyond the grave; that God does not leave men alone, but is ever seeking to lead them into life;—these are the rich thoughts that reign through his pages, and can never lose their helpfulness.[1] Above all, one idea domi-

[1] The justification of each clause may be found abundantly in Clement's writings. I need only make the following special references:

nated all that Clement wrote—the power of Christ the Divine Logos. This thought is the unifying element in all his books. It is He, the Son of God, who weans men from the corruptions of heathendom. He is the Divine Instructor. He alone can lead them to that mental and moral and spiritual culture which it is the one aim of the true Gnostic to attain.

Clement was inferior to Origen both in genius and in erudition, but he is at the same time free from Origen's extravagances, and he worthily inaugurates the great work of the school of Alexandria.

The Church, *Strom.* vii. 17, sec. 107 ; *Paed.* i. 6. The Eucharist, *Paed.* i. 2. Baptism, *Paed.* i. 6. Punishment, *Strom.* i. 27, v. 14, iv. 24; *Paed.* i. 8. Sacrifice, *Strom.* vii. 3, 7, and *passim.* In *Mercy and Judgment*, pp. 243-247, I have quoted not a few passages (*Strom.* i. 7, sec. 86 ; iv. 6, sec. 37 ; v. 14, sec. 123 ; vii. 6, *ad fin.* *Fragm.* ed. Potter, p. 1009 ; *Paed.* i. 8, sec. 70, etc.) to show the large and merciful eschatology which lies behind the rhetorical and popular phrases into which Clement, like other teachers, sometimes falls.

VIII

ORIGEN[1]

"Vir magnus ab infantia."—JER. *Ep. ad Pammach.*

IN the history of the early Church there is no name nobler or more remarkable than that of Origen. Few men have rendered to the cause of Christianity such splendid services, or lived from childhood to old age a life so laborious and so blameless. Anathematised for centuries by the ignorance and prejudice of men incomparably his inferiors in learning and saintliness, he has exercised an influence deeper in many respects than that even of Augustine. Amid the rage of his enemies great bishops supported him, and God himself

[1] *Origenis opera omnia Graece et Latine*, ed. C. et. V. Delarue, 4. vols. fol. Paris, 1733-59 ; Migne, *Patrologia Graec.* vols. xi.-xvii. The ancient Church historians—Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Nicephorus. Allusions in the writings of Epiphanius, Rufinus, Jerome, Vincent of Lerins, Suidas, Photius, and others. Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Panegyrica Oratio in Origenem* (Delarue, iv. 55-78); Pamphilus, *Apologia Origenis;* Rufinus, *De Adulteratione librorum Origenis;* Tillemont, Baronius, Schröckh, Neander, Gieseler, Baur ; Huet, *Origeniana* (Delarue, iv. 79-328) ; Guericke, *De Schola Alexandrinâ;* Redepenning, *Origenes*, 2 vols. Bonn, 1841 ; Westcott in *Dict. of Christian Biogr.* and *Contemp. Rev.* vol. xxxv. ; Lives by Cave, Böhringer (2d ed. Leipz. 1873), and Freppel, Paris, 2d ed. 1875. On Origen's doctrine, see Dorner, *Entwickelungsgesch.* i. 635 ; Nitzsch, *Dogmengesch.* i. 151 ; on his philosophy, Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philos.* i. 311-319.

blessed his cause.[1] Though many writers affected to doubt the possibility of his salvation, he was from his youth upwards a saint, and the beloved teacher of many saints.

Unlike Augustine, who was the son of a heathen father, and for many years of his life a Manichee, Origen was the son of a martyr, and a Christian from his birth. Unlike Augustine and Cyprian and Jerome, who only passed by repentance into a life of holiness, Origen from early boyhood bore a character on which not even the most virulent of his enemies could fix one authentic stain. He was by general admission the greatest, in almost every respect, of all the great Christian teachers of the three first Christian centuries.

He was born in Alexandria about A.D. 186. His name was Origen Adamantius. "Origen" means "born of Horus." Some have explained the second name to mean "the Adamantine," as though — like the other titles of *Chalcenteros*, *Chalceutes*, *Syntaktes*,[2] which have been sometimes given him — it referred to his indefatigable toil,[3] or, "the unwearied temper of his mind, and that strength of reason wherewith he compacted his discourses, or his firmness and constancy in religion notwithstanding all the assaults made against it."[4] But it appears from Eusebius that it was his proper name.[5]

[1] Tillemont, *Origène*, art. i. "Que Dieu même sembloît se déclarer pour lui, en faisant entrer par lui dans le sein de son Église ceux que cette même Église met aujourdhui entre ses plus grands ornemens."

[2] The names mean "Brazen-bowelled," "Brazier," "Composer." See Suid. *s.v.*; Jer. *Ep.* xxxiii. 3. But in *De Vir. ill.* 54, he says, "Origenes qui Adamantius."

[3] Suidas, Phot. *Cod.* 118, Jer. *Ep.* xvii. See Huet, *Origeniana* (Delarue's ed. iv. 81).

[4] Cave, *Lives of the Fathers*, i. 215.

[5] *H. E.* vi. 14, *καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν τῷ* Ὠριγενεῖ *ὄνομα.* There is no

Epiphanius calls him an Egyptian, Porphyry a Greek. His father had a Greek name, Leonides. We do not know with certainty what was his nationality, but he was probably born in Alexandria; and, as his mother knew Hebrew[1] — an accomplishment possessed by very few even of the most learned Fathers—there is some ground for Canon Westcott's conjecture that she was a Jewess.

His father, Leonides, was a Christian, though Suidas is probably mistaken when he calls him a bishop. That he gave to his son the name "born of Horus" proves nothing. Horus was the Egyptian Apollo, and names like Apollonius, Phoebiades, Dionysius, etc., were common even among Christians. They were given with reference to their sound, and not to their meaning.

Leonides had seven sons, of whom Origen alone is known to us. The boy received from his father a thorough training. He gave him that "encyclic" education which included grammar, mathematics, logic, and rhetoric. Origen's acquaintance with Greek literature is apparent in his writings, but still more that knowledge of every part of Scripture which was the precious outcome of his father's assiduity. To learn a passage of Scripture by heart was part of his daily task; but even as a child he was not content with a passive acquiescence in difficulties. Eager, precocious, athirst for real knowledge, he inquired so deeply into the real meaning of Scripture as to perplex the simpler mind of Leonides, who, while he gently checked his importunate questionings, was yet thankful for the promise of a powerful intellect. In joy at the birth of such a son

ground whatever for the malignant surmise of Epiphanius that the name was a vain title which he gave himself (*Haer.* lxiv. 73).

[1] Jer. *Ep.* xxxix. 1.

he would often come to the bedside where the boy slept and reverently kiss the breast "in which it seemed so clear that the Holy Spirit of God had made His temple."

When he grew older he became a pupil in the Catechetical School. Whether he attended the lectures of Pantaenus seems doubtful,[1] but he was a pupil of Clement, in whose classes he first formed the friendship of his fellow-pupil Alexander, afterwards Bishop of Jerusalem.

In the tenth year of the Emperor Severus, a violent persecution broke out against the Christians, and Leonides was thrown into prison by the Praefect Laetus. Fired perhaps by the example of other youthful confessors, the ardent boy showed so passionate a desire for martyrdom that he was only restrained by the tears and entreaties of his mother. When even these seemed likely to be of no avail, she could only frustrate his purpose of joining his father by concealing all his clothes. Unable to leave the house, he wrote to his father entreating him not to succumb out of any anxiety for the future of his large and penniless family.[2] The letter was still extant in the time of Eusebius, and formed a worthy introduction to Origen's voluminous writings.

Leonides was beheaded for the faith, and all his property was confiscated. The boy of sixteen at once undertook the support of his widowed mother and of his six younger brothers. He saved them from destitution partly by teaching and partly by aid from the generous patronage of a wealthy Alexandrian lady. That patronage was shared by Paul of Antioch, a man

[1] He does not say so, nor does Eusebius (vi. 14, sec. 8); Redepenning, i. 55.

[2] ἔπεχε μὴ δί ἡμᾶς ἄλλο τι φρονήσῃς. Euseb. *H. E.* vi.

of eloquence and influence, but of heretical opinions, with whom he was unwilling to communicate.[1] Probably his dislike to share the same roof with one who seemed to him dangerously in the wrong hastened his efforts to earn an independent living. As early as was possible, he became a teacher of "grammar," a word which included the elements of a general education. While he taught he also studied, and got together a little library, partly by purchasing books with the scant surplus of his hard-earned income, partly by making large extracts from the ancient classics. He never shared the bigotry of the narrower-minded Christians, who discouraged or even forbad the study of Pagan literature. To his latest days he held it to be at once a duty and a delight to utilise for the loftiest purposes the great poets and philosophers of the heathen world.

But God had higher work for him to do.

The edict of Severus had been specially aimed against all Christian proselytism. The position of the master of the Catechetical School was therefore one of prominent danger, and Clement had felt that to continue the teaching which he had undertaken for so many years would be impossible. For him it would have been death, and for his pupils it would have been a source of danger. He deemed it his duty to retire before persecution, and not uselessly to sacrifice his life. His scholars were scattered in various directions, and for a brief period the school was in abeyance.

Young as he was — for he had only attained his eighteenth year — Origen seemed to be marked out for the vacant post. His youth and his comparative obscurity sheltered him from immediate peril. It must

[1] Eusebius appeals to this proof of his orthodoxy.

be borne in mind that the office of catechete was not necessarily a public one. A man might be regarded as head of the school without any formal authorisation from the Church. His scholars came to him voluntarily. He received no stated salary; he made no charge for his lectures. His maintenance depended on the free gifts of his pupils. There was no building or lecture-room assigned to him, but he taught in his own private residence or any other convenient place which might be at his disposal.

Origen's succession, therefore, to the presidency of the school was accidental rather than otherwise. He saw that there were young Christians and inquirers who desired to learn, and that there was no one but himself who was able and willing to assume the hazardous duty of instructing them. He undertook—at first in a very humble way—the functions which were destined to derive their chief lustre from his fame and diligence.

He was from the first successful. Scholars thronged to the brilliant and youthful teacher; and it was not long before the Bishop Demetrius definitely assigned to him the office for which he was so exceptionally fitted. Possibly he may have been led to do so by the attention which Origen's position excited among the heathen population. The anecdotes of Epiphanius must always be accepted with caution, but there is nothing impossible in his story that on one occasion the mob of Alexandria seized Origen, clothed him in the dress of a priest of Serapis, gave him the tonsure, and, placing him on the steps of the great temple, ordered him to perform the office of a priest by distributing palm branches to the worshippers of the idol. He yielded to the pressure, but as he put the palms into the hands of the people he

cried aloud, "Come and receive the palms, not of idols, but of Jesus Christ."

If the incident be true, the probability is that the mob was acting more in jest than in earnest. But the real danger of Origen increased with his celebrity. The earnestness of enquirers left him no time for any teaching that was not immediately religious. He therefore sold the collection of classical books which he had purchased or copied out for himself. For these he received a sum which amounted to four obols, or about sixpence a day, and on this small pittance he lived for many years. His pupils would gladly have supplemented so humble a maintenance, but it was sufficient for his restrained desires. With noble independence he refused to accept anything from the gratitude of those whom he taught. "God," he said, "gives to his priests no earthly portion, because God himself is their portion. This is the difference between His priests and all others. And thus it is that Christ says to His own, 'Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.'" His example, as even Epiphanius admits, equalled his teaching, and his teaching was as holy as his example. His whole character bore the stamp of absolute sincerity. Living in the strictest asceticism, he tasted no wine; he slept on the bare ground, he fasted constantly even to the injury of his health, and, taking literally the injunction of Christ to his seventy disciples, he wore no shoes, but went barefoot for many years, and would not possess two coats.[1] Not content with spending the day in toil, he devoted many hours of the night to study.

It is said, and has been all but universally believed, that he went even further than this, in literal though

[1] Matt. x. 10.

mistaken obedience to what he believed to be a command of Christ.[1] He was living in a city where every prominent Christian was surrounded by suspicion and malignity, and in which no slanders were more recklessly common than charges of impurity. Not only young men but women flocked to his teaching, and, as he was sometimes obliged to see his female enquirers alone, and in times of persecution at all hours of the day or night, he desired to place his youth above the possibility of suspicion. He therefore determined to be one of those who, as the Lord had said, "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

It seems certain that, even when taken literally, the expression used by our Lord was merely a Jewish idiom to imply an unbroken chastity; and even if this cannot be proved with certainty, it was unfortunate that Origen, who followed Pantaenus and Clement in interpreting metaphorically so much of Scripture which is unquestionably literal, should have taken literally a phrase which the Church has accepted in a metaphorical sense. If he was indeed led into self-mutilation by a mistaken but heroic literalism, it was a youthful and intellectual error of which he afterwards repented.[2] And the error, though due to an imperfect judgment, could only have sprung from the noblest moral motives. It "gave proof," as Eusebius says, "of the greatest faith and temperance," and under such circumstances it won the astonished condonation of Demetrius himself. So far from cancelling his appointment, the bishop only urged him to renewed activity.

[1] Matt. xix. 12.

[2] See Orig. *on Matt. xix.* 12. *χρήσιμον εἰς ἀποτροπὴν θερμῶν μὲν τῇ πίστει νεωτέρων οἷς ὁμολογεῖν χρὴ ὅτι ἔρωτα σωφροσύνης ἔχουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατ' ἐπίγνωσιν* (Delarue, iii. 654 E).

But is the story true? Böhringer throws doubt upon it on grounds which cannot be maintained.[1] The fact that Origen interpreted the greater part of Scripture allegorically is no proof that in his earlier years he may not have been led by circumstances—as we know that others were—to accept *this* command literally. Nor is there any fatal discrepancy in the assertion that Origen kept his self-mutilation secret. Eusebius does not say that he concealed it from all, but only from *the majority* of his acquaintances.[2] Other stories of a similar kind, which are found even in Pagan writers, show that Origen may have desired not only to be entirely free from the assaults of personal temptation,[3] but also to entrust to one or two of his nearest friends a secret which would enable them at once to disprove any calumnies which might be uttered against him.[4] So far as we know, Origen was not assailed—as many of his contemporaries were—by these scandals; and in that case no occasion would have arisen to make public his heroic mistake.

But there are *other* grounds on which I agree with Baur and Böhringer in thinking that this well-known story may be founded on misconception. Eusebius is our sole original authority on the subject, and, although he had access to documents which exist no longer, he was by no means exempt from the possibility of error.

[1] It has also been questioned by Schnitzer and Baur. Engelhardt, Redepenning (*Orig.* i. 444-488), and Neander take the ordinary view. The latter (ii. 493) thinks that Eusebius could not have been mistaken on such a point.

[2] *H. E.* vi. 8. *τοὺς πολλοὺς τῶν ἀμφι αὐτὸν γνωρίμων διαλαθεῖν φροντίσαι.* And certainly the deed was so private that it was unknown to the ancients whether the means employed were "ferro" or "medicamine."

[3] Jerome says (*Ep. ad Pammach. et Ocean.*), "*Voluptates in tantum fugit* ut *zelo Dei*, non tamen secundum scientiam, ferro truncaret genitalia."

[4] See the remarkable anecdote in Just. Mart. *Apol.* i. 29.

It seems hardly likely that Demetrius would have publicly upbraided Origen in later years for a deed which at the time he is said not only to have condoned but almost extolled. Nor again does Origen's comment on Matt. xix. 12, written in his later years, at all necessarily imply that he was *himself* one of those who had misinterpreted the passage which his maturer judgment explained in a truer sense.[1] He argues indeed gently against those fiery souls, some of whom he himself had known, who, fortified by the authority of men like Philo[2] and Sextus, the Neo-Pythagorean,[3] had acted thus; and in arguing against these he points out not only the coarse scorn of men to which they made themselves liable, but also quotes passages of the Old Testament, which in his opinion discountenanced such an action.[4] Surely this comment, so far from incriminating Origen, points in the opposite direction. Had he been conscious of having acted thus, would he—at that time a presbyter—have pointed to the passages which might be quoted to prove that his priesthood was invalid?[5] The prohibition of Moses, if relevant at all, would have involved a just censure upon the conduct of those bishops who ordained him, and of himself for retaining his ecclesiastical rank. Eusebius does indeed tell us that Demetrius, with some inconsistence, dwelt upon this fact; but he does not quote

[1] Orig. *in Matt.* t. xv. 1-5, "quo loco et exsectionem et exsiccationem damnat." See Huet, *Origeniana* (Delarue, iv. 86). The words εἰ μη ἐωράκειμεν τοὺς τολμήσαντας point, as far as they go, against his personal share in the error.

[2] Philo. *Quod. det. pot.* sec. 48. ἐξεννυχισθῆναί γε μὴν ἄμεινον ἢ πρὸς συνουσιας ἐκνόμους λυττᾶν.—See Orig. l. c. (Delarue, iii. 654-658).

[3] Section 12 (*ap.* Rufin.) "Omne membrum corporis, quod suadet te contra pudicitiam agere, abjiciendeum."

[4] Lev. xix. 28; Deut. xxiii. 1.

[5] There was a canon ὁ ἀκρωτηριάσας ἑαυτόν μὴ γενέσθω κληρικός, but we cannot be sure of its date.

his letters, and it is remarkable that in the Alexandrian synods, which more or less condemned Origen, no reference was made to a circumstance which, in the then condition of Biblical exegesis, would have furnished the best, if not the only, justification of their severity.

I think then that the story is at least uncertain. If the case of Leontius of Antioch seems to prove that such a deed as that ascribed to Origen was no bar even to a bishopric until the Council of Nice,[1] on the other hand the epithet applied to Melito of Sardis,[2] and even to the apostle St. John,[3] proves that a life of extreme self-denial and virginal continence might have procured for Origen in early years a name which his friends misunderstood, and on which his enemies eagerly seized in order to brand him with an undeserved reproach, and to rob of the glory of purity a man whom they hated for his opinions.

Be that as it may, Origen continued for some thirteen happy years his labours as a Christian teacher. The number of his pupils at last obliged him to devolve upon a coadjutor the task of training the younger scholars, and he chose as his assistant Heraclas, who afterwards succeeded him, and ultimately became Bishop of Alexandria.

These years did not glide on without their own perils as well as their own blessings. The persecution of Severus continued for some time, and the Praefect Aquila, who succeeded Laetus in A.D. 203, continued the bad tradition of severity. One of Origen's earliest

[1] Whom Athanasius, *De Fug.*, calls ὁ ἀπόκοπος.

[2] ὁ εὐνοῦχος. Polycrates, *ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* v. 24.

[3] "Joannes aliqui Christi spado," Tert. *De Monog.* 17; "eunuchus," Jer. *on Is. lvi.*

scholars had been Plutarchus, the brother of Heraclas, whom he converted from Paganism, and this abandonment of the State religion brought the new convert under the scope of the imperial decree. He was the first who perished from this school of martyrs. Serenus was burnt to death. The catechumen Heraclides was beheaded. Hero met the same fate shortly after his baptism, as did a second Serenus. A maiden named Herais, while still a catechumen, received her "baptism of fire."[1] Origen was not wanting to these martyr-pupils. Himself a *born* Christian, he did not come directly under the provisions of a decree which was mainly intended as a terror to proselytes; but he accompanied his beloved scholars publicly to the tribunal, the scaffold, and the stake, embracing them and exhorting them to constancy. In this way he incurred the hatred of the populace, who on one occasion were barely restrained from stoning him. When Plutarchus was put to death the martyr's friends were so indignant that Origen was in great danger from their assault. On another occasion his house was surrounded by a threatening mob, and he could only secure his safety by hiding first in one house then in another. Eusebius sees in his astonishing escapes a special mark of the divine protection, and a reward for his zeal and faithfulness.[2]

When the heat of persecution began to cool down, Origen's indefatigable industry found time for private studies of an extensive character during the course of his public labours. Aided by his mother and by a rabbi whom he calls Huillus, he added greatly to his

[1] This famous expression seems to have been first used by Origen. Euseb. vi. 4: *τὸ βάπτισμα, ὥς που φησὶν αὐτος, τὸ διὰ πυρὸς λαβοῦσα.*

[2] *H. E.* vi. 3, 4.

knowledge of Hebrew,[1] an undertaking which in that age was both difficult and unusual. In his task of interpreting Scripture and teaching theology he also deeply felt the necessity for a thorough grounding in philosophy, and to attain this he attended the classes of the Neo-Platonist Ammonius Sakkas. This seems to have been after his twenty-fifth year. The reference to this fact by the philosopher Porphyry is probably a gross blunder. Referring to the fame of Origen, he says that he had known him well in his youth, and, while he admits his philosophic attainments, accuses him of spending his life "Christianly and therefore illegally" (*χριστιανῶς καὶ παρανόμως*), while in his teaching he adulterated the doctrines of Greek philosophy.[2] He says that Ammonius was born a Christian and became a philosopher, while Origen, "a Greek, and trained in Greek literature, swerved to the barbarian recklessness of Christianity."[3] It is most improbable that Ammonius Sakkas ever became a Christian, and if Eusebius confused Sakkas with another Ammonius, Porphyry possibly also confounded Origen with another Origen. It was, however, natural that Origen should attend the lectures of a heathen philosopher. He had to deal with youths trained in such schools, and he could not understand their perplexities unless he mastered the systems in which they were trained. Christians of narrow sympathies found fault with him, but his defence is ample. After mentioning that his school was sought both by heathens and heretics whom he desired to help, he says that he has

[1] Jer. *Ep.* xxxix. 1; *c. Ruf.* i. 13.

[2] Porphyr. *ap.* Euseb. vi. 19. "There were at periods not far remote from each other, and in Alexandria itself, a *Pagan* Ammonius, highly distinguished among the learned, a *Christian* Ammonius, and *two* Origens." —Neander, ii. 495.

[3] *πρὸς τὸ βάρβαρον ἐξώκειλε τόλμημα.*

only followed the precedent set him by Pantaenus, and also by Heraclas whom he first met in the lecture-room of Ammonius, and who, even when he became Bishop of Alexandria, retained the garb of a philosopher, and continued to study the literature of Greece. Origen did not plunge into the study of Greek philosophy any deeper than served his immediate purpose, which was to be able to enter sympathetically into the difficulties of inquiring catechumens. But there is no doubt that his familiarity with the writings of Plato left a deep impression on his tone of thought. Nor did he only study the works of Plato, but also those of Numenius, Moderatus, and of the Stoics Chaeremon, Cornutus, Apollophanes, and others.[1] He says—"When I had wholly devoted myself to the promulgation of the divine doctrines, and the fame of my skill in them began to be spread, and sometimes heretics, sometimes men trained in Greek philosophy came to visit me, I thought it *necessary* to examine the opinions of heretics and what philosophers pretend to know of the truth."[2] His various travels had the same object. "He visited," he said, "many places, and everywhere sought those who announced that they knew anything."[3]

His severer toils during this period of his life were diversified by two important journeys. About the year 215 he paid a visit to Rome, out of a desire to see "the most ancient Church of the Romans." His visit was brief, and we do not know whether he had any intercourse with Zephyrinus, who was then bishop. The views, habits, and studies of the Western Church differed so greatly from those of Origen that he does

[1] Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philos.* i. 315 (E.T.)

[2] See his letter to Gregory and the fragment of another letter (Delarue, i. 4, 30).

[3] *C. Celsum*, vi. 24.

not seem either to have received or made any great impression. Perhaps it was during this visit that he heard a sermon or lecture by the celebrated Hippolytus, and was treated by him with distinguished honour.[1] He probably sided with him in his opposition to the domineering spirit of the Bishops of Rome.[2]

His fame had spread into Arabia, and a soldier came to Alexandria bearing letters to Demetrius and to the Praefect of Egypt, in which he begged that Origen might at once be sent to him. We do not know the circumstances which rendered his presence necessary, but he satisfied all requirements, and was able to return in a short time.

The details of the chronology of the life of Origen are uncertain, and some have supposed that during the latter part of his residence in Alexandria he paid his well-known visit to Julia Mammaea, the mother of the Emperor Alexander Severus, at Antioch.[3] Julia Mammaea was a woman of earnest and inquiring spirit, and can hardly fail to have been impressed by the teachings of Origen. He went to Antioch under the escort of a body of soldiers, and lived there for some time in great distinction.[4] Mammaea never made a profession of Christianity, but she evidently respected Christians;[5] and if she and her imperial son never got beyond a syncretism like that of the half-heathen Samaritans who "feared the Lord and served their own gods," we may yet trace the influence of Origen in the pure and noble

[1] Jer. *De Vir. ill.* [2] Döllinger, *Hippol. and Callist.* p. 236 (E.T.)

[3] Alexander Severus succeeded Elagabalus in 222. The language of Eusebius does not necessarily imply that Mammaea was Empress when she sent for Origen. [4] Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 21.

[5] Euseb. vi. 21: *θεοσεβεστάτη εἰ καί τις ἄλλη γεγοννῖα καὶ εὐλαβὴς τὸν τρόπον.*

morality in which, amid the fathomless corruption of those days, the Empress trained her son.[1]

In A.D. 215 Caracalla was at Alexandria, and, in savage revenge for some sarcastic verses in which the Alexandrians had insulted him and his mother, he inflicted a massacre upon the inhabitants. During the terrible days of slaughter, and the tumults which followed, all attempts to continue the work of teaching or study must have been in vain, especially as Caracalla's wrath was aimed most of all against the learned.[2] Origen was compelled to fly secretly not only from Alexandria, but from Egypt. He took refuge at Caesarea, in Palestine, where he could be secure of the protection both of Theoctistus, Bishop of Caesarea, and of his old schoolfellow the confessor Alexander, who was now Bishop of Jerusalem. From this visit must be dated the new period of his life, and the beginning of overwhelming troubles.

Alexander and Theoctistus were anxious that such a light should not be hid under a bushel, but placed, as it were, on a lamp-stand to enlighten the whole Church. Origen, in spite of the splendid work which he had done and the high reputation which he had achieved throughout the Church, was still but a layman. Undeterred by this consideration, the bishops invited him to give public lectures during the Church services. When Demetrius heard this, he was indignant, and he wrote in vehement

[1] Clinton places this visit in A.D. 226. It was more probably *not later* than 218, when Julia Mammaea was at Antioch in the first year of Elagabalus (see Baronius and Delarue ; but Huet and Redepenning fix it in A.D. 223, the second year of Alex. Severus).

[2] Dio Cass. lxvii. 22 ; Spartian. 6.

terms to the Palestinian bishops, declaring that their conduct was unprecedented. Eusebius has preserved a fragment of their reply, "You assert in your letter," they said, "that such a thing has never been heard of, and has never taken place till now, that laymen should give an address in the presence of bishops. In that remark you are absolutely mistaken; for wherever men are found with fit qualifications to benefit their brethren they are invited by the holy bishops, our blessed brethren, to address the people. Euelpis was invited in this way by Neon at Laranda; Paulinus by Celsus at Iconium; Theodorus by Atticus at Synnada. And doubtless the same thing has taken place elsewhere, though without our cognisance." In the so-called Apostolic Constitutions, though hierarchic in tone, a layman of experience and dignity is allowed to teach,[1] and this is in accordance with the known custom of Jewish synagogues, as repeatedly referred to in the Gospels and Epistles. Demetrius, however, was unconvinced, and his anger unappeased. He claimed that Origen was under his jurisdiction, and sent deacons to demand his return.

Origen obeyed, but from this time forward his relations to Demetrius seem to have been strained. Heraclas had probably carried on the work of the Catechetical School during his absence; and Origen now entered on a new and even more fruitful field of labour, which was nothing less than the career of authorship. Had he remained a catechist, his fame might have resembled that of Pantaenus. As a writer, he produced on the whole Church a far deeper and more permanent impression.

It was about A.D. 219 that the generosity of a wealthy friend named Ambrosius enabled him to devote

[1] *Apol. Const.* vii. 32.

his whole time to expositions of the Scriptures. Ambrosius must be numbered with that small but interesting class of men who, without being great themselves, have by their well-counselled and munificent encouragement given scope to the greatness of others. Such men have their reward in the gratitude of posterity. Wherever the name of Origen is held in honour, the name of Ambrosius will be mentioned with affectionate gratitude.

Ambrosius had been a heretic—either a Valentinian or a Marcionite—and had been brought back to the bosom of the orthodox Church by Origen's influence. He was eager for the knowledge of Scripture, and regarding Origen as the greatest of living teachers, he ungrudgingly devoted his fortune to facilitate the labours of the holy scholar. Origen calls him his "taskmaster,"[1] and says (for the reference in the fragment of a letter preserved by Suidas is probably to Ambrosius) that "he left him no leisure for meals or rest. I am perpetually collating manuscripts. Even the night is not granted me for repose. Of the space from dawn to the ninth and tenth hour I say nothing. All students give that time to the investigation of the Divine oracles and reading." Not content with incessantly urging him forward, Ambrosius paid seven or more shorthand writers to be always with him, and to relieve each other in writing at his dictation; and the same number of clerks to make fair copies, and girls skilled in calligraphy.[2] With these facilities, Origen was spurred to an unbounded activity. It was to the instigation of Ambrosius that we owe the main labours of Origen as a commentator—especially the Commentary on St. John. It was by his advice that Origen undertook his great work in answer to

[1] ἐργοδιώκτης, *Comm. in Joann.* t. v. (Delarue, iv. 94).
[2] *Comm. in Joann.* t. vi. (Delarue, iv. 101).

Celsus, and to him are partly addressed the *Treatise on Prayer*, and the *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. Origen, and the Church in general, are deeply indebted to Ambrosius; but few human services are perfect, and Jerome is probably right in blaming Ambrosius for an indiscreet zeal which tended to injure Origen, by publishing some of his works which were hasty, immature, and only intended for private perusal.[1]

Origen had already begun the immortal labours on the *text* of Scripture which resulted in the *Hexapla*.[2] The toil necessary for such a collation of the various texts and versions was stupendous, and it is not too much to say that but for the help of Ambrosius it could never have been carried out with so much completeness. To him it is partly due, that his friend took his place henceforth in the very first rank of Christian scholars, theologians, apologists, and exegetes. His first great commentary was that on the Gospel of St. John, which he began shortly after his return to Alexandria. It ultimately expanded to thirty-two books. It was at this period that he began his commentaries on Genesis, the Psalms, and the Lamentations. To this period also belong his two books *On the Resurrection*, and his four books *On First Principles*, as well as his no longer extant *Miscellanies*.

In these manifold labours Origen continued to spend

[1] Jer. *Ep.* 65, *ad Pammach. et Ocean.* Origen is said to have made the complaint to Fabian of Rome; Epiphan. *Haer.* lxiv. 3. See Huet's *Origen.* (Delarue, iv. 99, 255, 261.) See especially the interesting passage in Origen's Hom. 25 *in Lucam.* "Plerique . . . dum plus nos diligunt quam meremur haec jactant . . . quae conscientia nostra non recipit. Alii vero tractatus nostros calumniantes ea sentire nos criminantur quae nunquam sensisse nos novimus." (I quoted this passage on the first page of my *Eternal Hope*, and it sounded so "modern" to Mr. Matthew Arnold that he could hardly believe that Origen had written it.)

[2] Rufin. *H. E.* vi. 18; Jer. *Catal.* 54; Euseb. vi. 23, sec. 3.

his life till about A.D. 228. He was then past forty, and for a quarter of a century Alexandria had been the chief scene of his public and literary activity. He was now invited to Achaia—"on ecclesiastical business"—perhaps in order that the Church of Achaia might avail herself of his learning and counsel, to put an end to some new type of error.[1] According to Photius the journey was undertaken without the consent of Demetrius; but all the circumstances are involved in uncertainty. All that we know is that Origen, before proceeding direct to Achaia, went to Caesarea, and that there he was ordained presbyter by his friends Theoctistus and Alexander. To us this step certainly seems to have been irregular; but it may have been justified by circumstances of which we are unaware. The names of Theoctistus and Alexander are universally respected, and it is possible that they only intervened in order to protect Origen from the injustice of his own ecclesiastical superior. One thing, however, is certain—the character of Origen was entirely free from vulgar elements of vanity or sacerdotal ambition. His humility was one of his most marked characteristics.[2] The consent to his ordination must have been wrung from him by strong considerations of duty, and the responsibility of it must rest chiefly with the ordaining prelates.

After his ordination he continued his journey to Athens. Of his stay in that city we have no authentic account, but it is probable that he visited the various schools of philosophy. He also made a journey to Ephesus, and there he seems to have had a disputation with a heretic, who, although unable for a moment to withstand him, published a totally false account of the

[1] Rufin. *H. E.* vi. 18; Jer. *Catal.* 54; Euseb. vi. 23, sec. 3.

[2] See *in Num. Hom.* xi. (Delarue, ii. 308).

discussion, and claimed the victory. At Antioch he was able to expose the forgery by showing to the members of the Church his real method of writing and teaching.[1]

When his work in Achaia was finished he went back to Alexandria, about A.D. 231. He must have returned with many and deep misgivings. He could hardly expect that the bishop would view with equanimity his ordination to the presbyterate by bishops of another jurisdiction. If the story of the rash act of Origen's youth be true, Demetrius may have taken the view which prevailed on this subject in later times, and may have considered that it excluded Origen from the sacred office.[2] Or again, as he seems to have been a man of no breadth and no learning, he may have been startled by the free philosophical discussions of Origen's book *On First Principles*. At any rate he was excessively angered by what had taken place. Eusebius, in a charitable phrase, says that "he showed traces of human weakness." His relation to Origen resembled that of the Bishop of Caesarea to St. Basil. He was jealous of a man whose glory threw him entirely into the shade, whose opinions he could not understand, with whose methods he was unable to sympathise, and whose independence he was not qualified to control.[3] If the second book of the *Apology* of Pamphilus had come down to us we should have a clearer view of the course of events; as it is, much must be left in obscurity. Origen was sensible of the storm which was gathering, but calmly occupied himself with the fifth volume of his Commentary on St. John, trusting in Him who stilled the

[1] See the fragment of his letter (Delarue, i. 5).

[2] Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 8, sec. 4.

[3] See Jer. *De Vir. ill.* liv. Photius says, τρέπεται διὰ τοῦτο (jealousy) Δημετρίῳ εἰς μῖσος τὸ φίλτρον καὶ οἱ ἔπαινοι εἰς τοὺς ψόγους. He says that he had stated this distinctly, *Cod.* 118.

winds and the sea. "After this,"[1] he says "we were drawn forth from Egypt, for God rescued us who led from thence His people. Afterwards when my enemy waged most bitter war against me by his fresh letters, which were truly at enmity with the Gospel, and roused all the winds, reason exhorted me to stand to the contest, and to save the ruling principle within me lest troublous disputes should avail to bring the storm even upon my own soul, rather than to compose the rest of my commentary before my understanding received calm. Further, the absence of my usual shorthand writers prevented me from dictating my meditations. But now since God has quenched the many fiery darts which have been hurled against me so that their force is spent, and my soul, familiarised with the things which have happened because of the Heavenly Word, is constrained to endure more easily the assaults that have been made upon me, having, as it were, obtained some fair weather, I wish to defer no longer the dictation of what remains."

We can hardly realise what depths of emotion these words conceal. Origen evidently felt that he had been treated with cruelty and injustice. It is said that Demetrius turned upon him and brutally upbraided him with the self-sacrificing error of his early days. This may be as little true as the revolting story about the Ethiopian told by Epiphanius—a story which bears upon the face of it every mark of absurdity, and may be passed over with disdainful silence.[2] Nor is there the least reason to believe, on the authority of Peter of

[1] Orig. *Comm. ad Joann.* t. vi. (Delarue, iv. p. 101) and *Ep. ad Amicos* (id. i. 6).

[2] It is not alluded to by Pamphilus, Eusebius, Porphyry, Dionysius, Jerome, Rufinus, Vincent of Lerins, or even Theophilus. Epiphanius admits that many foolish stories were current about Origen, *Haer.* lxiv See Huet, *Origen*, i. 2, sec. 13, iv. sec. 4.

Alexandria, as quoted by the Emperor Justinian in his letter to Mennas, that *Heraclas* also was to be numbered among the enemies of Origen, and that "the frantic Origen" had caused him much trouble. On the contrary, the relations of Heraclas to Origen seem to have been marked by mutual friendship. Eusebius says that Origen left Heraclas in charge of the Catechetical School,[1] and Heraclas named as his successor Dionysius, a pupil and admirer of Origen. Jerome does not mention the name of Heraclas as an opponent of Origen, and we are glad to believe that Gennadius and Peter are blundering when they mentioned him. He whose martyred brother Plutarch had been converted by Origen, and who had been for nearly thirty years his classmate, pupil, and coadjutor, is not likely to have turned against him.

Origen was, as Cardinal Newman says, "the victim of episcopal envy."[2] No sooner had he left Alexandria—and he left it for ever, probably without the least desire to return—than Demetrius summoned a synod of his subordinate bishops and some presbyters to condemn him. This synod forbad Origen to teach in Alexandria, but did not consent to his deposition from the priesthood. The presbyters present seem to have been more independent in their judgment than the Egyptian bishops, over whom the metropolitan exercised an extraordinary power.[3] Demetrius therefore summoned a second synod, composed of bishops only, apparently but *three* in number, in which Origen was excommuni-

[1] Euseb. vi. 15, sec. 26. [2] *Hist. of the Arians*, i. 406.

[3] Eutychius (*Patr. Alex. Ann.* p. 233) says that Demetrius was the only bishop in Egypt, and that he appointed *three* others, to whom Heraclas (who first was called *Patriarch* of Alexandria) added no more (see Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 230). Was Heraclas one of the presbyters who, in part at least, protected Origen? Theophilus (quoted by Gennadius, *De Vir. ill.* 33) and Justinian (*Ep. ad Mennam.* Mansi, ix. 512) deny it —but their authority does not go for much.

cated. As he had never been tried, nor his defence heard, the sentence of this synod of a few Egyptian bishops, under the presidency of an avowed enemy, was wholly worthless. It is said that Demetrius sent the judgment to all Churches, and procured the approval of Rome.[1] But the *grounds* of the condemnation are nowhere stated by any adequate authority. If they rested on matters of doctrine the excommunication was peculiarly unfair, for Origen's philosophical methods were beyond the comprehension of a man like Demetrius, who, according to the *Chronicon Orientale*, had been a humble vine-dresser. When his predecessor Julius lay on his deathbed, he saw (says the legend) an angel, who told him his successor should be the man who brought him a bunch of grapes. Demetrius—who was married, a layman, and could neither read nor write—brought the grapes, and accordingly became Bishop of Alexandria. Nor were the few bishops whom, according to the same authority, he had himself appointed, much likely to be fairer judges. Moreover, Origen's writings, as he himself complains, were, even during his lifetime, interpolated and falsified, so that many were misled as to his real views.[2] It seems likely that he was condemned on grounds of ecclesiastical etiquette, nor is there anything to prove that Heraclas would not have willingly recalled him if there had been any chance of inducing him to return. The great Dionysius undoubtedly regarded him with affection and admiration.[3]

Three unknown suffragans under an illiterate metro-

[1] Jerome says: "Urbs Roma ipsa contra hunc cogit senatum, *non propter dogmatum, non propter haeresim, ut nunc adversum eum rabidi canes simulant*, sed quia gloriam eloquentiae ejus et scientiae ferre non poterat, et illo dicente omnes muti putabantur," *in Rufin.* ii.

[2] See his previously quoted letter (Delarue, i. 5).

[3] Euseb. vi. 46.

politan hardly formed a competent tribunal for the excommunication of the greatest theologian and scholar whom the Church had seen since the days of the Apostles, and especially when the metropolitan was guilty of conduct "ou il paroist," says Tillemont, "de la jalousie, de l'emportement, et de l'injustice."[1] If they were misled by forged documents the case was worse still.[2] Some Churches accepted the decisions of this insignificant synod, but they were treated as a dead letter by the bishops of Phoenicia, Palestine, Arabia, and Achaia, who accepted the defence which Origen published, and exonerated him from all censure.[3] He wrote to his friends at Alexandria, pointed out the reasons why his views had often been misinterpreted, and complained bitterly of the way in which he had been treated.

Yet, mindful that even Michael the Archangel, when contending with the devil, would not bring against him a railing accusation, but only said "The Lord rebuke thee," he tells his friends that, instead of hating his enemies, they must forgive and pray for them. The picture which he draws of the state of things in Alexandria is not encouraging. He compares his position to that of the prophets who had to uplift their voices against priests and rulers, and he quotes the verse of Micah (vii. 5), "Trust ye not in a friend; put ye not confidence in a familiar friend"; and of Jeremiah (iv. 22), "My people is foolish, they have not known me . . . they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no

[1] *Mem.* iii. 139. (ed. Bruxelles, 1699).

[2] See Rufin. *De adulteratione librorum Origenis.* (Jer. ch. v. 251, ed. Martianay.)

[3] Jer. *Ep.* 33, *Apol. c. Ruf.* ii. 18. "All this combustion vanished into smoke."—Cave, *Lives of the Fathers.* "The stories raised against him did not hinder him . . . from being called 'the Master of the Churches.'" —Doucin, *Hist. de l'Origenisme*, 1.

knowledge." Jerome says that in this letter "he tore, and inveighed against" Demetrius and the bishops; but we may hope that those terms are exaggerated, since the only passage which Jerome quotes is perfectly calm and moderate. Origen elsewhere dwells on the duty of a presbyter to endure his injuries when he is unjustly deposed by the faction of his enemies.[1]

From this point begins the third great epoch of the life of Origen — the period of his work in Palestine. We find throughout it the same brilliant studies, the same devoted labours, the same severe afflictions. The exact chronology of the events by which it was marked is not ascertainable, but we can see that for more than twenty years his chief home was in Caesarea, and that his life was spent in the service of the Church.

Palestine offered him a natural place of refuge, both because he was there loved and honoured, and because its two most eminent bishops had been, unintentionally, the chief cause of his misfortunes. He seems to have stayed at first with Alexander at Jerusalem, and to have sedulously visited the places connected with the history of our Lord.

It was probably during his stay at Jerusalem, and while his expulsion from Alexandria was still recent, that there occurred the pathetic incident which is connected with the spurious homily known as "Origen's Discourse." We are told by Epiphanius that he was invited to preach in the sacred city, and rising to address the congregation read out the words of Psalm l. 16, 17, "But unto the wicked saith God, Why dost thou take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing that thou hatest

[1] See Orig. *in Matt.* t. xvi. 6-25.

to be reformed and hast cast my words behind thee?" After reading these verses he burst into such a storm of tears and sobs that he was unable to proceed; and his congregation wept with him. The story may be true though the extant discourse is forged; and if it be true, nothing surely but the most stupid incapacity would misinterpret it to imply that Origen felt himself to be a guilty man. The confessions of the holiest are ever the most sincere, and though Origen had been blameless from his youth upwards in the sight of man, yet the heart knoweth its own bitterness. Such a man, in the utter ruin of his hopes, and the sense of human ingratitude and injustice, might weep for faults which a worse man might almost have regarded as virtues. Those tears might have been wrung from him far more by the sense of imperfectness, deepened by the malice and hatred of others, than by the spontaneous reproaches even of a conscience so tender and so innocent as his.

But though the sympathy with which he met in Jerusalem may have been a balm to his sorely-wounded spirit, the Holy City was not so well suited to be a permanent home as Caesarea, which was a seaport and the residence of the Procurator. Caesarea was a place of advanced culture, where he had access to many books. Ambrosius had joined him, and did not relinquish his function of "taskmaster." Pupils gathered round Origen at Caesarea as at Alexandria, and among them at one time were Gregory Thaumaturgus and the excellent Firmilian, Bishop of the Cappadocian Caesarea. In the life of Gregory we shall see how thorough, how encyclopaedic, how philosophical, how full of insight and of tenderness was the method which Origen adopted with his illustrious scholar.

A large part of his time was taken up by the exposition of Scripture. Always on Wednesday and Friday, sometimes daily, and sometimes even twice a day, he expounded the Bible popularly to mixed congregations. At first he did not permit these discourses to be reported by shorthand writers, but only published them as written and revised by himself. But after his sixtieth year, when long familiarity with his subject and the practice of constant speaking had given him perfect accuracy and fluency, he allowed his extempore homilies to be taken down. A large portion of his extant homilies consists of these addresses to the Christians of Caesarea. If modern preachers are sometimes disheartened by careless listeners, it may console them to know that even in the days of Origen a preacher could sometimes only attract a scanty congregation, that women went to a back part of the church to gossip during the sermon, and that some of the listeners were impatient and inattentive.[1]

The fact that the bishops of Palestine invited him to instruct the people shows that they regarded him as a man of the same unimpeachable orthodoxy as themselves. If Demetrius had charged him with heresy, we gather from what we are told about Origen's letter to his friends at Alexandria that the heresy may have been his supposed views as to the salvability of the Devil.[2] And yet the fact seems to be that Origen's opinion on this subject hardly differed from that which was narrated with admiration in the life of St. Martin of Tours;—namely, that *if Satan could change his nature* he would not be beyond the pale of salvation. The truth is that Origen was called upon by the Church,

[1] *Hom. in Ex. xiii.* 2, *in Jud. vi.* 1.

[2] Jer. *Apol.* ii. *in Ruf.* *Quod diabolum salvandae dixerit esse naturae.*

and by his own sense of faithfulness to God, to be a champion against heresy; and indeed he was the most formidable champion whom the Church had produced since the death of St. John. But the deep problems which he was thus led to examine compelled him to touch on disputable points. In a discussion with a Valentinian Gnostic, named Candidus, the disputant had defended the heretical dualism which lay at the base of many Gnostic systems, and in proof of it had urged that the Devil is of *his own nature evil*, and therefore could never become otherwise. Amid the deep silence of Scripture such speculations must be necessarily vain, and Origen could not have met the objection without either declining to enter on a subject of which nothing certain is revealed, or by answering, as he did answer, that the Devil is a created being, and that therefore his sin resulted from his free-will, and that his nature (*per se*, and in the abstract, and apart from any assertion as to the present conditions of his free-will) was capable of repentance, and if so of forgiveness. All was hypothetical, and Origen had never dreamed of saying that the Devil, *as such*, could be saved. This must have been thoroughly understood by theologians like Alexander of Jerusalem and Theoctistus of Caesarea, and they must have known that they could with a clear conscience entrust to their illustrious friend the chief homiletic teaching in the Palestinian Church.

But while Caesarea continued to be Origen's usual home, his life was diversified by various travels. His journeyings in Palestine, where we trace him in the valley of the Jordan,[1] may have taken place before he settled at Caesarea. At Jericho he found in a cask an

[1] *Hom. in Job*, tom. vi. sec. 24, γενόμενοι ἐν τοις τόποις ἐπὶ ἱστορίαν τῶν ἰχνῶν Ἰησοῦ.

anonymous Greek version, which he afterwards added to the *Hexapla*. He also made some stay in Sidon,[1] and at Tyre. Besides this he took other journeys, of which the exact date cannot be fixed.

About A.D. 235 the peaceful course of his life was disturbed by the persecution which arose under the brutal barbarian Maximin. Two circumstances thrust Origen into dangerous prominence. He was famous for his success in converting the heathen, and the edict of Severus, which Maximin revived, was specially aimed at proselytisers and converts. He had also been in friendly relations with Alexander Severus and his mother Julia Mammaea, and was therefore marked out for the tyrant's special detestation. To remain where he was would have been tantamount to throwing away his life. He escaped from Palestine and took refuge with Firmilian in Cappadocia. His friends Ambrosius and Prototectus were seized and imprisoned, and to them he addressed his *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. From A.D. 235 to A.D. 237 he lived in hiding in the house of a learned Christian lady named Juliana. By a curious coincidence this lady had inherited the library of Symmachus, the translator into Greek of the Old Testament. Juliana possessed a copy of this translation with other interpretations of the Scriptures, which were to Origen of priceless value, and which made the time of his retirement very fruitful. In his *Hexapla* he has placed the version of Symmachus in the column after that of Aquila, and before the Septuagint. This version he may have known before; but Palladius once saw a very ancient version, stichometrically arranged, in which Origen had written an autograph note, saying he had found it "in the house of Juliana the virgin in Caesarea,

[1] *Hom. in Josh.* xvi. sec. 2.

when I was hiding there, who said that she had received it from Symmachus himself, the interpreter of the Jews."

It was after his return to Palestine (A.D. 238) that Gregory Thaumaturgus delivered at Caesarea the famous panegyric which shows the supreme eminence of Origen in the work of education.

He visited Athens a second time, whether for any special object or not we do not know. Eusebius tells us that he was there busily occupied with his commentaries.[1] It may have been there that he held a disputation with a heretic named Bassus, in the course of which he appealed to the story of Susanna. An illustrious auditor was present at this conference — the learned Julius Africanus. He objected to this reference to the Book of Susanna, which he regarded as obviously spurious and no real part of the Book of Daniel. At the time he remained silent, as was proper; but after the discussion was over he wrote Origen a letter, which is one of the most precious specimens of the critical spirit in the early centuries. He pointed out the two Greek puns, which prove that the book was written in Greek and not in Hebrew, and shows how completely it differs in manner and spirit from the canonical books. Origen's reply — dated from Nicomedia — is profoundly disappointing. He knew more Hebrew, and was in general more learned than his correspondent, but the letter proves that with all his philological attainments he was far behind Africanus in critical sagacity. It offers in fact, as Canon Westcott says, "a crucial and startling proof of Origen's deficiency in historical criticism. Most of his arguments are based on *a priori* considerations, which would apply equally to books even more obviously spurious. He fails to appreciate the

[1] Euseb. vi. 32.

deep line of demarcation which separates the canonical from the apocryphal writings, and when he talks of not removing the "eternal (*αἰώνια*) landmarks which our predecessors have fixed," he fails to give adequate importance to the noble appeal of his correspondent, "May such a principle never prevail in the Church of Christ, that falsehood is framed for His praise and glory."

He also made two other visits to Arabia, both of which produced the most excellent results.

The first was rendered necessary by the errors of Beryllus, the able Bishop of Bostra, who, like so many other good men before the faith of the Church had been dogmatically defined, had adopted untenable views about the nature of the Incarnation. Eusebius had the writings of Beryllus and the answer of Origen before him. Both have perished, but, so far as we can conjecture, Beryllus leaned to the Monarchian opinions, which denied independent deity to Christ previous to the Incarnation. The Arabian bishops saw that these views were half-way between those of Sabellius and the Patripassians, and in 244 they summoned a synod in which the errors of Beryllus were condemned. Since he remained unconvinced, the bishops sent for Origen, whom, so far from regarding as a deposed priest and an excommunicated heretic, they reverenced as the most powerful living champion of the orthodox faith. By his gentleness, his dialectical skill, and his superior learning, he happily succeeded in showing Beryllus that his views were untenable. The candid bishop withdrew his statements and thanked Origen for having brought him back to the orthodox faith.

The success of his visit led to his being invited a second time in order to dispel some gathering errors with respect to the Resurrection. Some teachers seem

to have been arguing that the soul died with the body, and that it was only awaked to life with the body at the Resurrection. This was practically the speculative and comparatively harmless error of the *psychopannychia*, or sleep of the soul in the intermediate state. No synod was assembled to condemn the view, but Origen succeeded in persuading its supporters that it could not be maintained.

These happy labours did not by any means exhaust his activity, and two of his greatest works—the *Commentary on St. Matthew* and the *Answer to Celsus*—were written after he was sixty years of age.

In his book against Celsus he expressed the foreboding that the happy days of peace which Christians had been enjoying would speedily come to an end. Philippus Arabs and his wife Severa had corresponded with Origen, and showed themselves so favourable to the new faith that legend has asserted their secret conversion.[1] Of this there is no evidence,[2] but it is certain that, when Philippus was murdered, Decius (A.D. 250) assumed a most hostile attitude to the new faith. Then began one of the severest persecutions which Christianity had yet experienced, and it was aimed especially at the great leaders. Fabian was martyred at Rome; Babylas at Antioch; Alexander of Jerusalem was seized, and died in prison. On the outbreak of the persecution Origen had gone to Tyre, but being arrested he was

[1] About this period there was a sort of recrudescence of superstition Julia Domna, wife of Severus, patronised the neo-Pythagorean Philostratus; Julia Soemia, mother of Elagabalus, patronised the worship of the sun; Julia Mammaea, mother of Alexander Severus, leaned to Monotheism; and inquiring ladies would naturally feel an interest in such a teacher as Origen.

[2] Jerome says of Philip "*Primus omnium ex Romanis imperatoribus Christianus fuit.*" Philip was not a Roman, and the story of his conversion is only an obscure legend.

subjected to excruciating tortures. "The Evil Spirit," says Eusebius, "aimed at him his deadliest violence."[1] He was laden with heavy chains, and thrust into the depths of a dark prison. An iron chain was fastened round his neck; for many days his feet were widely distended on an instrument of torture known as the wooden horse.[2] He was threatened with burning and other torments, and, all the while, with a hideous refinement of cruelty, his anguish was so regulated as to rob him of the crown of actual martyrdom. Yet a martyr he was, in deed no less than in will. Weakened by the sixty-five years which had almost brought him to the allotted term of human life, he yet held out with incomparable fortitude; and while he was himself encouraged by a letter of consolation from Dionysius of Alexandria, he wrote letters of encouragement to all who were in peril of similar sufferings.

The early death of Decius (A.D. 251) brought a respite, but the frame of Origen, broken by long trials and labours, gradually succumbed to the brutalities to which he had been subjected. No record has been preserved of his last hours, but he died at Tyre A.D. 253, at the age of sixty-nine.[3] His resting-place in the wall behind the high altar of the church of Tyre was honoured for generations, and the memory of his greatness still lingers about a spot where even the fame of the great Emperor Frederic Barbarossa has long been forgotten.[4]

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 1. [2] See Valesius's note on Euseb. vi. 39.

[3] Möller (*Herzog*, xi. 96) fixes his death in the first year of Valerian, A.D. 254.

[4] The body of Barbarossa was conveyed all the way from Tarsus, and buried, not far from the grave of Origen, in the splendid church built in the fourth century by Paulinus of Tyre.

VIII

Continued

INFLUENCE OF ORIGEN

SECTION II

WHATEVER may have been his speculative errors on some subjects, few men have rendered to Christianity such splendid services as Origen.[1] Nay, more—anathematised as he has been for centuries—it has been granted to few men to influence so deeply the opinions of the Church of God.

"Certainly," says Mosheim, "if any man deserves to stand first in the catalogue of saints and martyrs, and to be annually held up as an example to Christians, this is the man; for, except the apostles of Jesus Christ and their companions, I know of no one among all those ennobled and honoured as saints who excelled him in virtue and holiness."

"There were homilies before his," says Canon Westcott, "but he fixed the type of a popular exposition. His *Hexapla* was the greatest textual enterprise of ancient times, his treatise *On First Principles* the earliest attempt at a systematic view of the Christian

[1] Jer. *ad Pammach.* I venture here to repeat a few words which I have used respecting Origen elsewhere. See *Mercy and Judgment*, pp. 298-360.

faith. Both in criticism and interpretation his labours marked an epoch."

It is difficult to sum up his various merits. He proved himself the first writer, the profoundest thinker, the greatest educator, the most laborious critic, the most honoured preacher, the holiest confessor of his age. He first laid down the lines of a systematic study of the Bible. His writings still continue to be the precious heritage of the Church. Saints and martyrs were glad to sit at his feet. Generations of scholars appropriated the results of his labours. It is deplorable to read the wicked gossip and malignant nonsense that has been written about him by such writers as Epiphanius, Nicephorus, and Suidas, who were not worthy to kiss the hem of his garment. That forgers, like the pseudo-Caesarius, could speak of "the insane and impious Origen"; that even men like Baronius and Bellarmine, Luther and Beza, could have openly doubted whether he was not doomed to endless torments;[1] that he should have been condemned by the machinations of such a bishop as Theophilus of Alexandria, and at the command of such an Emperor as Justinian; that his character should have been systematically torn to pieces by what Socrates calls "a four-horse chariot of detractors";[2] and that the "feeble hands iniquitously

[1] A Jesuit, named Binet, wrote *De Salute Origenis*, Par. 1629. A certain St. Mechthildis, in the fourteenth century, saw Samson, Solomon, and Origen in torments. "Origenem," says Luther, "jam diu diris devovi." Picus of Mirandola was almost condemned for arguing that it was more reasonable to believe that he was saved, *Apol.* vii. 199. Since the seventh century the Popes at their consecration abjured his errors, and said that he, Didymus, and Evagrius were "aeternae condemnationi submissi" (*Diurn. Rom. Pontif.* p. 312). "Peu de personnes," says Doucin (*Hist. de l'Origenisme*, p. 81), "dans la communion de Rome, osent douter de sa damnation éternelle."

[2] Socr. *H. E.* vi. 13. These four φιλολοίδοροι were Theophilus, Methodius (who however praised him "by way of palinode"), Eustathius

just" of men who never bore one of his trials, never emulated one of his virtues, never rendered any service whatever to the Church of Christ, should still write of him in a tone of compassionate patronage or insolent condemnation, is indeed a matter of no moment to the great martyred saint, but is deeply discreditable to the judgment of Christian men.

Very different was the opinion of his greatest contemporaries and followers who were beyond the range of that narrow episcopal envy to which he fell a victim. Men like Demetrius and Epiphanius, and Theophilus of Alexandria, wrote against him; but true saints of God like Gregory Thaumaturgus, Pamphilus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Didymus, John of Jerusalem, Eusebius of Vercellae, and Eusebius of Caesarea, praised and honoured him; Hilary of Poictiers, Ambrose, Victorinus, Rufinus, Jerome, and others of the most eminent Western Fathers borrowed from him to an almost incredible extent, and even when they harshly blamed him, treated his writings as "une source inépuisable de lumières."[1] Jerome did not hesitate to call him "the greatest master of the Church after the Apostles."[2] Athanasius defended his orthodoxy, and spoke of him with loving epithets. Augustine calls him "*ille vir tantus.*"[3] Vincent of Lerins says of him, "If a life confers authority, great was his industry, great his purity, patience, endurance; if nobility, what could be nobler than to be born in a house glorified by martyrdom? In eloquence, erudition, and philosophy he surpassed all. Innumerable teachers, priests, confessors,

of Antioch, and Apollinaris the heresiarch. Methodius, though Eusebius does not choose to mention him, was probably one of the φιλαίτιοι who caused Pamphilus to compose his *Apology*.

[1] Doucin. [2] *Praef. in Quaest. in Gen.* [3] *Ep.* 40, *ad Hieron.*

martyrs, rose from his bosom. What Christian did not venerate him as a prophet, what philosopher as a master? Even imperial princes reverenced him. The day would fail me before I could tell of all his greatness, or even touch on a part of it."[1]

The causes of the long storm of execration by which his name was pursued were manifold. It is far from impossible that even in early times he was confounded with two other Origens;[2] one a Platonic philosopher, and another called "the Impure," perhaps the founder of the immoral *Origeniani*, if that sect ever existed outside the confused imagination of Epiphanius.[3] There was also more than one Adamantius. But, apart from this, Origen's originality and philosophic depth were beyond the comprehension of mean and shallow intellects. He was a voluminous writer on a multitude of subjects, and therefore furnished a broad field for hostile criticism. Some of his books, intended only for private circulation, were published to the world by the indiscreet zeal of his friends. His tentative suggestions—what may almost be called his speculative soliloquies—were confused with his definite opinions, although they were, as Photius says, "only thrown out γυμνασίας χάριν, by way of exercitation, not positively or dogmatically."[4] Others of his views, like those which bore on eschatology, were,

[1] Vincent. Lerin. *adv. Haer.* xxiii. p. 351.

[2] Primasius (?) says there were three Origens.

[3] Epiphan. *Haer.* 63, comp. Aug. *Haer.* 42. *De Haer.* i. 22. The Origen in whose presence Plotinus stopped short in his lecture was the philosopher.

[4] Phot. *Cod.* 296. Athanasius says (*Def. Nic. Fid.* vi. sec. 27) that Origen had only written some things ὡς ζητῶν καὶ γυμνάζων. Not one of his contemporaries seems to have called him a heretic. The first attack on his orthodoxy came from Marcellus of Ancyra, whose own orthodoxy was at least dubious (Euseb. *c. Marcell.* i. 23). His so-called Arian tendencies, if they can be proved, are no worse than those which are condoned in many of the Ante-Nicene Fathers; and Pamphilus

as Athanasius pleaded on his behalf, on points left undecided by Scripture and by the Church. His real opinions—that, for instance, on the theoretic salvability of the devil—were in his own lifetime entirely misinterpreted alike by his friends and his enemies.[1] Gross forgeries were circulated in his name. Even his genuine books were garbled by the crime of heretical interpolators. The apologies for him and his doctrine written by Pamphilus the martyr, Eusebius of Caesarea, Dionysius, and others,[2] have perished. It was supposed by later ages, contrary to all the evidence, that he had been condemned, not for supposed ecclesiastical irregularities, but for heretical opinions by the Egyptian synods; and, above all, that he was condemned by the Fifth Œcumenical Council. That assembly was a discreditable one at the best. It was born and died amid jealousies and counter-jealousies. Intrigue stood by its cradle and intrigue followed its hearse. It woke the indignant protests of some of the best teachers of that age against the uncalled-for dogmatism, caused by the zeal of those who wanted to teach what they had never learned. It led to an outburst of cruel and wanton persecution. Its decisions were long rejected by the Churches of North Africa, Spain, and Gaul. It was lightly regarded by Pope Gregory the Great. It displayed nothing so much as the arbitrary will of a meddling and heretical Emperor, and the fickle intellect of an ignorant and simoniacal Pope. And after all it is to the last degree doubtful whether it *did* condemn Origen, whose name, as is almost certain, was only inserted into

quoted many testimonies of early writers in his defence. He considered his eschatological views, in their widest latitude, to be strictly reconcilable with Catholic teaching, and he desired to be faithful to the Church as a simple Christian (*Hom.* xvi. *in Lucam*).

[1] Orig. *Homil.* xiv. *in Luc.* [2] Phot. *Cod.* cxviii.

its anathemas by later forgeries.[1] He whom Athanasius called the "wonderful and labour-loving" gradually became the "schismatic," the "most unholy," the "frantic and impure" heretic of such persons as Theophilus and Justinian.[2]

Yet, in spite of the many circumstances which both in his own lifetime and in later ages have told most unfortunately against the fair fame of Origen, many of the best Church historians have done him justice. Socrates, as well as Eusebius, speaks of him most honourably, calls his opponents "men of small learning," and paints the chief of them in the darkest colours.[3] Sozomen warmly eulogises Theotimus of Tomi, the good Scythian bishop who plainly told Epiphanius that he would never dishonour a person so venerable for his piety as Origen, nor durst he condemn what their ancestors never rejected.[4] Bishop Haymo of Halberstadt says that what is orthodox and useful in his writings abundantly overbalances his faults.[5] Erasmus and Huet, Cave and Bishop Rust, Tillemont, Halloix, Genebrard, Neander, Gieseler, all speak of him with enthusiasm. Schröckh calls him "the greatest man that the ancient Church had." Mosheim says that "he possessed every excellence that can adorn the Christian character." Professor Maurice says, "I had rather be with Origen wherever he is, than with Justinian and Theodora wherever they are." "I love the name of

[1] See the point fully argued in the author's *Mercy and Judgment*. See too Hefele, *Conciliengesch.* ii. 790, 859 *sqq.*

[2] "Many elephants cannot wade the river. The mosquito says it is only knee-deep."—Bengali proverb.

[3] He calls Aetius ὀλιγομαθὴς for depreciating Origen, and applies the epithet εὐτελεῖς to those of his critics who, unable to come to the light by their own fame, wished to gain distinction by blaming their betters. See Socr. ii. 35, iii. 7, vi. 9-10, 12, 17, vii. 6.

[4] Sozom. viii. 11, 14, vii. 26.

[5] *Breviar. H. E.* vi. 13.

Origen," says Cardinal Newman, "I will not listen to the notion that so great a soul was lost."[1] "His whole life," says Canon Westcott, who has rendered admirable services to his memory, "was fashioned on the same type. It was, according to his own grand ideal, 'one unbroken prayer' (*μία προσευχὴ συνεχομένη*), one ceaseless effort after close fellowship with the Unseen and the Eternal."[2]

It is, of course, impossible within these limits, nor does it fall within the scope of my work, to enter either into the philosophy or the theology of Origen. Both were closely linked together. There are, however, two points on which I must touch—namely, his eschatology and his orthodoxy as regards the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. In considering both we must remember that he was "essentially the theologian of an age of transition. His writings present principles, ruling ideas, tendencies, but they are not fitted to supply materials for a system of formulated dogmas after the type of later confessions."

Against the false realism of the Montanists and the false idealisms of the Gnostics he maintained two great truths which inspire all his writings, "the unity of all creation as answering to the thought of a Creator infinitely good and infinitely just; and the power of moral determination in rational beings."

His eschatology is only the fragment of a great scheme. He found in man's free-will the origin of moral evil, which he regarded negatively rather than positively as the loss of that good which is only attainable by union with and imitation of God. He regarded man as but one element in the vast order of spiritual beings and material things, and the world as the scene of his

[1] *Hist. of the Arians*, p. 42. [2] *Contemp. Rev.* vol. xxxv.

destined purification. He believed that the great restitution of all things would be brought about by the Death of Christ, in order that the end may be like the beginning. Hence he thought that all sentient beings, including even the evil spirits which he identified with the heathen gods, would be ultimately brought into perfect unity with God. He did not in the least give up the belief in future retribution, but thought that it was destined, not for torment, but for amelioration, and that all evil would be finally purged away like dross in a baptism of fire, or in the probatory flame of the final conflagration.[1]

As regards the Trinity, Origen used the word Τριάς, and believed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. His undiscriminating enemies called him "the Father of the Arians;" but, though his language occasionally falls below the dogmatic standard of subsequent catholicity, he maintained the perfect Godhead and perfect Manhood of Christ which were moulded together in one Person, like the fire and the metal in glowing iron.[2] He was neither an Ebionite nor a Patripassian; and if he teaches a certain subordination in the Divine Son, it is a subordination only in mediatorial office. He not only taught, but was the first to teach with distinctness, the Catholic doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son.[3] The fact that

[1] See especially *De Princ.* i. 6, 2; *Hom. in Luc.* xxiv.; *c. Cels.* v. 15.

[2] *De Princ.* ii. 6, 6. "This metaphor," says Westcott, "made an epoch in Christology."

[3] Bull (*Def. Fid. Nicen.* c. ix.) and Waterland (*Defence of some Queries*, xii. xvii.) both consider that the views of Origen on this subject were sound. But surely the question of his orthodoxy may be staked on the single remark of Athanasius, who appeals to Origen as an authority on the Eternal Generation and Consubstantiality of the Son; and, on that of Jerome, who tells us that Didymus had shown that the charge of heresy rested on misinterpretation. See Huet, *Origen*, p. 123. Tillemont, iii. 3,

some passages of his writings are charged with supporting Sabellianism is a sufficient proof how little he was inclined to Arianism.[1] "He can hardly be accused of heresy," says Dr. Neale, "whom St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, and St. Gregory of Nyssa have defended."[2]

Origen's services as an expositor of Scripture were quite incomparable. By his *Tetrapla* and *Hexapla* he became the founder of all textual criticism; by his *Homilies* he fixed the type of a popular exposition; his *Scholia*[3] were the earliest specimens of marginal explanations; his *Commentaries* (τόμοι) furnished the Church with her first continuous exegesis; his book *On First Principles* was "the earliest attempt at a systematic view of the Christian faith"; his knowledge of the Bible, and his separate contributions to its elucidation, were absolutely unrivalled. Like the influence of Socrates in Greek philosophy, so the influence of Origen in Church history is the watershed of multitudes of different streams of thought. "In spite of his very patent faults," says Bishop Lightfoot, "which it costs nothing to denounce, a very considerable part of what is valuable in subsequent commentaries, ancient and modern, is due to him. A deep thinker, an accurate grammarian, a most laborious worker, and a most earnest Christian, he not only laid the foundation, but, to a very great extent, built up the fabric of Biblical interpretation."

p. 157, compassionately says, "qu'un homme qui est dans une disposition si catholique peut avoir des opinions hérétiques parce qu'il est homme, mais ne peut estre hérétique, parce qu'il n'est pas superbe ni attaché a son erreur."

[1] *C. Cels.* vi. 64, *in Jerem.* Hom. xi. 1 (Delarue, i. 681, iii. 262).

[2] It is true that he adds "he can hardly be acquitted whom so many synods, if not a general council, have condemned;" but the synods were mostly small, biassed, and discredited; and *no* general council condemned him.

[3] Σημειώσεις. These are mostly lost.

The errors and extravagances of the allegorical interpretation, which his greatness tended to perpetuate, arose from the traditional assumption that the Bible is of homogeneous value, and in every particular supernaturally perfect.[1] This false dogma was extended even to Apocryphal books, and necessitated a false system of exegesis. Origen believed that even the Greek translation was inspired, and saw hidden mysteries in its solecisms and errors. Ignorant of the only true method of accounting for the frank anthropomorphism and imperfect morality of parts of the Old Dispensation, he tried to remove the difficulties which they involve by impossible, arbitrary, and fantastic explanations.[2] It must not, however, be forgotten that while Origen's system is largely vitiated by erroneous principles and misapplied methods; while there is not a shred of evidence to support the *threefold* interpretation—literal, moral, and mystic—of which he was, if not the actual inventor, yet certainly the chief supporter; while the allegorical method which he practised led to a mere aphoristical philosophy artificially appended to Bible passages,[3]—his *Commentaries*, nevertheless, abound in thoughts of the utmost beauty and helpfulness, and have

[1] He states the principles which guided him in *De Princ.* iv. *περὶ τοῦ θεοπνευστοῦ τῆς θείας γραφῆς.* In these commentaries (*τόμοι*) says Jerome "tota ingenii sui vela spirantibus ventis dedit, et recedens a terra in medium pelagus aufugit." Accounts and criticisms of Origen's exegesis are furnished by R. Simon, *Hist. Crit. des Comment. de N. T.* p. 37 ff.; Schröckh, iv. 29-146; Reuss, *Gesch. d. Heil. Schriften*, sec. 511; Diestel, *Gesch. des N. T.*

[2] He speaks of the *σκάνδαλα καὶ ἀδύνατα καὶ προσκόμματα* in the literal sense, and perhaps set the fashion of speaking of the *vilitas literae.* This constitutes his retrogressive and disastrous originality. See *Hom. in Num. xii.* 1, *in Levit. vii.* 5; *De Princip.* iv. 15-18, and *passim Philokal.* 6, 12.

[3] Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philos.* i. 319. Porphyry (*ap.* Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 19) acutely points out the *metamorphosis* of simple passages by this kind of treatment. Such comments were too frequently a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο*

been an inexhaustible mine in which all his successors have dug for precious ore.[1] Further than this, he helped to overthrow the opposite error of a slavish literalism, which is hardly less dangerous than allegorising extravagance. He says in so many words that he does not repudiate the reality of the whole history, and that "the passages which are true in their historical meaning are much more numerous than those which are interspersed with a purely spiritual signification."[2]

γένος. For abundant instances, see Huet, *Origeniana*, ii. Quaest. 13 (Delarue, iv. 240-244).

[1] For a fuller and more systematic account of Origen as an exegete I must refer to my Bampton Lectures for 1886 on *The History of Interpretation*, pp. 187-203. Some of his commentaries (*e.g.* that on 1 Cor.) are much freer from allegory than others. See on the whole subject Redepenning, *Orig.* i. 296-324. Diestel, *Gesch. d. A. T.* p. 36 *sq.*

[2] *De Princip.* iv. 19.

VIII

Continued

ORIGEN'S WRITINGS

SECTION III

It only remains to allude briefly to Origen's writings. They were so voluminous that Epiphanius speaks of 6000 books and pamphlets being ascribed to him—but more probably this is a corruption for 600.

I. Exegetic.

These included *Notes* (σχόλια, σημειώσεις), *Popular Homilies* (ὁμιλίαι), and *Commentaries* (τόμοι), on nearly all the Books of the Old and New Testaments, of which a considerable portion is extant either in the original or in Latin translations. The ripest and best was the *Commentary on St. John*. It has not come down to us entire, but, being the first fruits of his labours in Alexandria, may truly be called an epoch-making book. Like all the works of Origen, it is marked by three defects—an absence of literary style, which leads to diffuseness and sometimes even to dulness; a lack of historic insight, which prevented him from grasping the literal sense of Scripture in relation to the original circumstances under which the words were uttered; and a tendency to groundless allegory and fantastic speculation. In spite of these defects "it abounds in noble thoughts and subtle criticisms; it grapples with great difficulties; it unfolds great ideas; and, above all, it retains a firm hold on the human life of our Lord."[1]

[1] Westcott (*Dict. of Biogr.* sec. 5).

II. Dogmatic.

1. *On the Resurrection.* This book is only extant in small fragments. It was meant to oppose the materialism which prevailed with reference to the future life.

2. *On First Principles* (*circ.* A.D. 230). This book dealt with God, creation, redemption, and the Holy Scriptures, and is the earliest attempt to elaborate a philosophy of the plan of salvation. It was written exclusively for scholars. He tells Fabian, Bishop of Rome, that about some things in it he had changed his views, and that Ambrosius had published it against his will.[1] Large fragments of the third and fourth books are preserved in the *Philokalia*, and it was translated by Rufinus, whose version cannot, however, be relied upon, as it does not profess to be perfectly faithful.[2] A sentence of this book suggested the argument of Bishop Butler's *Analogy*, of which it stands as the motto on the title page.

3. *Miscellanies* (Στρωματεῖς) (*circ.* A.D. 231). Only three fragments of a Latin translation remain.

III. Apologetic.

The eight books against Celsus (A.D. 249).[3] This is the greatest of the early Apologies for Christianity. It covers an entirely different ground from the works of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and the other Greek and Latin apologists. Their function had been to refute the moral, social, and political attacks upon Christianity; on Origen fell the far more difficult task of defending the cause of the faith against the historical, critical, and philosophical arguments of a powerful opponent. Celsus, writing in the person of a Jew, had first summoned to his aid the whole enginery of Judaism and Paganism to assault the history of Christianity as contained in the Gospels; he had then proceeded to criticise its most characteristic conceptions; and had finally contrasted it unfavourably with the philosophy, the religion, and the natural life of heathendom.[4] It may fairly be said that Origen is victorious all along the line. It is true that he uses the Old Testament Scriptures in a way which carries no conviction to modern

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[1] Jer. *Ep.* 41. (Opp. ed. Martianay, iv. 341.)

[2] This version and some fragments of another are published in Delarue, i. 42-195.

[3] Edited by Professor Selwyn. Lond. 1877.

[4] A good and concise account of the ἀληθὴς λόγος of Celsus is given by Baur, *Ch. Hist.* ii. 140-167 (E.T.); see too Keim, *Celsus' Wahres Wort.* Zurich, 1873.

controversialists, and his failure to apprehend the progressiveness of revelation and the true nature of inspiration introduced an element of weakness into the earlier part of his argument. But in philosophic depth and spirituality he was incomparably superior to his antagonist, and the appeal to the Christian life—the old argument of Tertullian, "*Nos soli innocentes Sumus*"—was never stated with nobler and more convincing force.

IV. Practical.

1. *On Prayer* (*circ.* A.D. 231 ?). This is one of Origen's most beautiful writings. He meets with masterly insight the *a priori* objections to prayer which have often been urged in modern days, and gives practical directions respecting the topics and methods of true prayer.

2. *The Exhortation to Martyrdom* (A.D. 235). This fine treatise deals with martyrdom far more wisely and moderately than those of Tertullian and Cyprian, and founds the arguments for facing martyrdom on truer and deeper bases.

V. Critical.

The Hexapla. This was a Bible consisting mainly of six columns: 1. The Hebrew text. 2. The same in Greek letters. 3, 4, 5, 6. The Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, the LXX., and Theodotion. Two anonymous versions were also added afterwards in parts, so that the work became an *Octapla.*[1] When the four Greek versions were published separately it was called the *Tetrapla.* By this great and most laborious work Origen laid the foundation of all textual criticism. The work required him to steer clear of many intense prejudices, but, with the aid of obelisks and asterisks to mark omissions in or additions to the LXX., he was able, in some measure, to avoid offence.[2]

VI. Letters.

Eusebius had collected more than a hundred of Origen's letters, and the whole series is said to have been originally arranged in

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[1] Euseb. vi. 16 ; comp. Epiphan. *Haer.* 64.

[2] The original, which filled nearly fifty volumes, is said to have perished when the Arabs took Caesarea in 653. The best edition of what remains is that of Dr. Field.

eleven books, of which two contained those written in defence against hostile criticism. Their loss is deeply to be regretted. The only extant letters are that to Julius Africanus on *The Story of Susanna* and that to Gregory Thaumaturgus.

The *Philokalia* was an admirable selection of extracts from the writings of Origen, drawn up by St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus.

NOTE ON ST. GREGORY OF NEOCAESAREA.[1]

Gregory, surnamed Thaumaturgus, or the Wonder-worker, was born at Neocaesarea in Pontus, now Niksar, on the river Lycus, about A.D. 221. His real name was Theodorus or God-given; his parents, however, were not Christians, but devout Pagans, of distinguished position, and in wealthy circumstances. Although there had been Christians in Pontus even in the days of St. Peter, yet Neocaesarea was so predominantly Pagan that it contained but seventeen Christians when Gregory became its bishop.

Our chief authorities for his life are his own writings, a florid oration by Gregory of Nyssa, and a few allusions to him in Jerome, Basil, and the Church historians.

All that Jerome says in the somewhat meagre biographies of his *De Viris illustribus*, is as follows: "Theodorus, who was afterwards called Gregory, Bishop of Neocaesarea in Pontus, at an exceedingly early age, because of his attainments in Greek and Latin literature, went from Cappadocia to Berytus, and thence to the Palestinian Caesarea, accompanied by his brother Athenodorus. When Origen had observed their eminent capacity, he encouraged them to the study of philosophy, in which, by gradually introducing the faith of Christ, he made them his own followers. After having been taught by him for five years they were sent back to their mother. Theodorus, before starting, addressed to Origen a panegyric of thanksgiving, and having summoned a large assemblage, recited it in the presence of Origen himself, and it is still extant. He also wrote a paraphrase of Ecclesiastes, short indeed, but extremely useful. Various epistles of his are also current, and

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[1] The chief authorities for the life of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus are: his *Panegyric on Origen*; Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat.*; Basil, *De Spir. Sanct.* xxix. 74; *Epp.* 28, 204. 210. Jer. *De Vir. ill.* 65; *In Eccles.* 4; *Ep.* 70. Rufinus, *H. E.* vii. 15; Sozomen, vii. 27; Socrates, iv. 27; Evagrius, iii. 31; Suidas, *Lexicon.*

he is specially famed for signs and miracles which he wrought during his episcopate, to the great glory of the Churches."

In his *Panegyric* Gregory says that he speaks after eight years of silence, chiefly devoted to the study of the Latin language and Roman law. Gratitude alone compels him to trespass on the public attention. He then introduces some biographical particulars. Up till the age of fourteen he had been a Pagan like his parents, but at that time his father died. This proved to be a turning point in his career. His mother wished him to be trained for public life as an orator, and he was accordingly advised to become a pupil in the public school of jurisprudence at Berytus, in preference even to going to Rome. About that time his brother-in-law was invited to occupy an important post under the Roman governor of Caesarea, and when he was able to summon his wife to join him she was escorted, at his request, by her two young brothers Gregory and Athenodorus, who thus had the advantage of using the public vehicles, and the passports (*σύμβολα*), which had been sent from Caesarea by the hand of a Roman soldier. They passed through many cities on their journey, and finally arrived at Berytus, whence by some influence, which Gregory regards as directly providential, they were induced to go to Caesarea and to put themselves under the care and teaching of Origen. Once subjected to the powerful spell of his attraction, they in vain struggled to escape from it. The souls of the two youths became "knit with that of this inspired man as the soul of Jonathan was knit with David." Their enthusiasm for philosophy was deepened by Origen's benign and affectionate instruction. Day after day they resorted to him, and from the first "their souls were penetrated by his reasoning as with an arrow; for he was possessed of a rare combination of a certain sweet grace and persuasiveness, along with a strange power of constraint." They learnt to regard philosophy as the basis of all true piety, and gave up all other aims. Origen seems to have devoted himself heart and soul to their education. Beginning with logic, he carried them in due succession through physics, geometry, and astronomy; but above all he instilled into their minds the principles of ethics, and illustrated his teaching by the consistency and beauty of his personal life. Justice, prudence, temperance, fortitude, self-knowledge, all seemed to blend themselves with Origen's teaching, and to flow from that piety which he set before them as the parent of all the virtues. But meanwhile he was insensibly winning them to the recognition of yet deeper and more eternal truths, to the vindication of which he bent all his marvellous gifts of persuasiveness. He led them to metaphysics and theology, as the crown of all which he had to teach.

Yet his instruction was the reverse of narrow. He read with them freely the best literature of Pagan Greece, and interdicted the study of no books except such as were atheistic. His most consummate power was shown in the interpretation of Scripture, and long before he had reached this point the youths had ceased to be Pagans; for, "like some spark lighting on our souls, love was kindled and burst into flame within us, love to the Holy Logos, the most holy object of all, who attracts all to himself by His unutterable beauty."

Five years had now elapsed since the youths had joined Origen in Caesarea. What other events had happened during those years we do not know. It is difficult to reconcile the less trustworthy narrative of Gregory of Nyssa with these slight autobiographical details. If it be true that part of these years was spent by the brothers in Alexandria, we may suppose that the persecutions of Maximin during A.D. 235 and 238 had necessitated the retirement of Origen and some interruption of the course of teaching. If so, the false charge of immorality which Gregory of Nyssa states to have been made against the young Gregory at Alexandria may have occurred during this period. The story is that a woman brought an accusation against Gregory and demanded a sum of money. This sum he scornfully paid, but immediately after receiving it the woman became a demoniac, and the demon was exorcised by Gregory. To this story, perhaps a pure invention of lying rumour, Gregory makes no allusion.

The time came for Gregory to leave his beloved teacher. He would have liked to stay till the end of his life as a learner and a listener, and he compares his departure to that of Adam leaving Paradise, or the Prodigal turning his back on his father's house, or the Jews exiled to Babylon. His only comfort is that his Saviour will be with him, and will keep him. He ends by declaring that there is not one word in his *Panegyric* which has not been sincere. "But, O dear soul," he says, addressing Origen, "arise thou and offer prayer, and now dismiss us; and as by thy holy instruction thou hast been our saviour when we enjoyed thy fellowship, so save us still by thy prayers in our separation. . . . Pray that He may send us some good conductor, some angel to be our comrade on the way. And entreat Him also to turn our course, and bring us back to thee again; for that is the one thing which above all else will effectually comfort us."

Happy the teacher who deserves such love! happy the pupils whose gratitude inspired such a *Panegyric!*

Gregory had not long returned to his native town when he received from Origen a letter addressed to him as "my most excellent lord and venerable son." The letter is still extant, having been

preserved by Gregory Nazianzen and Basil in their *Philokalia*. Origen, after speaking of Gregory's ability and attainments in Roman law and Greek philosophy, urges him to devote his talents to the furtherance of Christianity, and to make his various studies tend to the extension of divine knowledge. By gaining all that is best from heathen literature, he, like the Israelites, might spoil the Egyptians. Above all he urges him to study the Holy Scriptures, in which he will find the fulfilment of the promise, Knock and it shall be opened to you. "My fatherly love to you," he says in conclusion, "has made me thus bold; but whether my boldness be good, God will know, and His Christ, and all partakers of the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ. May you also be a partaker!"

The next thing that we hear of Gregory is that while still a very young man, he was elected to the bishopric of Neocaesarea. Hearing that this was in contemplation, Gregory concealed himself, but Phaedimus, Bishop of Amasaea, got over his reluctance by the extraordinary expedient of first electing and ordaining him in his absence, and inducing him to submit afterwards to the customary rites. His diocese indeed was not extensive, if it be true that there were only seventeen Christians in the city; but we are told that the entire population had already entreated him to stay among them, and, like another Moses, to be their magistrate and lawgiver. He was induced to consent, not only as the result of his own reflections, but, according to Gregory Nyssen, who now becomes our sole authority, by a vision in which the Virgin Mary bade St. John to instruct him in the true faith. A creed professing to be by him is still extant, and Gregory Nyssen says that he had seen at Neocaesarea the original autograph. It became a standard for the Church of Pontus, and Basil tells us that he and his brother had been taught it by their grandmother Macrina.[1] Indeed it is to Gregory's influence that Basil ascribes the orthodoxy of the Church of Pontus. The Bishop of Nyssa gives it at full length in his life of the Wonder-worker, but its genuineness is not absolutely certain, while the other formulary, called ἔκθεσις τῆς κατὰ μέρος πίστεως, is almost certainly spurious.

It was probably about A.D. 240 that he was ordained bishop, and his time was mainly spent in missionary activity. He was so successful that when he died all the citizens of Caesarea had become Christians *except* seventeen. In A.D. 250 the terrible persecution of Decius began to rage, and Gregory—who held on this

[1] Basil, *Epp.* 204, 207.

subject the common-sense view of Athanasius, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Cyprian—withdrew himself, and advised all who were in danger to save their lives by flight or concealment. He was indeed pursued to his place of retirement, but, according to the legend, the envoys sent to arrest him and his deacon only saw two trees.

In A.D. 257 he was able to return to Neocaesarea. In 258 he sanctioned annual feasts in commemoration of the martyrs, hoping that they would help to allure the Pagan population, who were accustomed to such festivities. In 266 his Church suffered from invasions of the Goths and Boradi, who carried away many captives, and it was still further afflicted by the base and greedy conduct of many professing Christians, who seized this opportunity to advance their own worldly interests. We learn these facts from the canonical letter of Gregory, in which such misconduct is severely denounced.

He was present in A.D. 264 at the Council of Antioch, convened for the condemnation of Paul of Samosata, and again in 269, if the Theodorus who signed the acts of that council was Gregory. He probably died about A.D. 270, regretting with his last breath that even seventeen Pagans should still be left in Neocaesarea, and directing that no land should be bought for his grave. He was buried in the magnificent church which he himself had built.

Many wonders are narrated of him—how he turned the course of the river Lycus by planting his staff in the bed of the river, and how this staff grew into a tree; how he completely dried up a lake, about which two young brothers were disputing, so that no moisture remained even in the hollows; how he once spent a night in a heathen temple, disabling the oracular demons by the spell of his presence, and giving them leave to return by writing on a parchment, "Gregory to Satan—enter"; how he could move the heaviest stones at a word; how the multitude of his acts of healing led to the building of a Christian church, which was standing in the days of Gregory of Nyssa; how he killed a Jew, who was pretending to be dead, by throwing his mantle over him; how at a vast meeting of Pagans in the theatre the mob shouted "Zeus, make room for us," and Gregory sent them a message, "There shall be granted you larger room than you pray for, or have ever known"; whereupon a terrible and depopulating pestilence ensued which yielded only to the prayers of Gregory. Some of these portents we should be extremely sorry to believe; others have not a particle of evidence in their favour; others may be gross exaggerations of real events refracted by credulity and superstition. All that we can clearly see is that Gregory was one of those men who were endowed with what is called in America "a magnetic personality," and that the intense impression caused by his dignity and saintliness produced effects

upon the minds and bodies of others which were sufficient to win him the surname of "The Wonder-worker." More interesting to us is the picture furnished by his panegyrist of his missionary labours. He tells us that early in the morning crowds of all ages and both sexes, with the sick and afflicted, used to gather at his doors, and that in accordance with their several needs Gregory "preached, questioned, admonished, instructed, and healed. In this way, and by the tokens of divine power which shone forth upon him, he attracted multitudes to the preaching of the Gospel. The mourner was comforted, the young man was taught sobriety, to the old fitting counsel was addressed. Slaves were admonished to be dutiful to their masters; those in authority to be kind to their inferiors. The poor were taught that virtue is the only wealth, and the rich that they were but the stewards of their property and not its owners."

The little that we know of Gregory Thaumaturgus presents him in so attractive a light that we should gladly have welcomed fuller and less legendary particulars of so remarkable a man.

IX

ST. ATHANASIUS[1]

"Know that we must not serve the time, but serve the Lord."—
ATHANASIUS TO ABBOT DRACONTIUS.

SECTION I

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS ORDINATION

ATHANASIUS, the greatest and most persistent of the early defenders of the faith, was born in Alexandria about the year 297. His childhood fell in the period of the terrible persecution of Christians by Maximian

[1] AUTHORITIES FOR THE LIFE OF ATHANASIUS.

The chief materials for his biography are derived from :—

1. His own writings, especially his "Encyclic Epistle," "Apology against the Arians," "Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya," "Apology to Constantius," "Apology for his Flight," "Letter to Serapion on the Death of Arius," "Letter to the Monks," "History of the Arians," and "Letter on the Synods of Ariminum and Seleucia." These have been conveniently edited in the original by Canon Bright, with an introduction (Clarendon Press, 1881). Other notices are scattered through his other writings.

2. Contemporary or early notices of Hilary, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Epiphanius, and Jerome.

3. The Church historians, Sulpicius Severus, Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret. These must be used with caution, and corrected from more certain data, or we shall have "the frequent scandal of seeing

in A.D. 303. Of that persecution he had no personal recollection, and merely mentions that he had heard from the men of that generation how even the Pagans commiserated the Christians, and endured fines and

the *consensus ecclesiae* resolve itself into some mendacious novel-writer and his tail of copyists."

4. Greek lives by Pachomius, Gelasius, Metaphrastes, and an anonymous writer (used by Photius) are for the most part valueless ; and the Arabic lives are still more so.

Editions.

The best editions of the *Opera Omnia* are the Benedictine, 1698 ; Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, xxv. His historical writings and orations against the Arians have been edited by Canon Bright, Oxford, 1881 and 1873, and are translated in the *Library of the Fathers*, under Dr. Newman's editorship, in 1843-4.

There are lives of Athanasius by Montfaucon, in the Benedictine edition, 1698 ; Tillemont, vol. viii.; Cave, *Lives of the Fathers* and *Historia Literaria ;* Canon Bright, in his edition of the *Orations against the Arians ;* Möhler, *Athanasius der Grosse*, 1827, second ed. 1844 ; Fialon, *St. Athanase*, Paris, 1887.

Other books which are useful for this phase of the fifth century are Zahn, *Marcellus*, 1867, and *Constantin*, 1876 ; Reinkens's *Hilarius*, 1864 ; Keim's *Constantin*, 1862 ; Rendall's *Julian ;* Sievers's *Libanius*, 1868. For the rise and progress of Arianism, we may refer to Dorner's *Person of Christ* (E.T.), vol. ii.; Newman's *Arians*, Gwatkin's *Arians*, Kaye's *Council of Nicaea*, and Dr. Hort's *Two Dissertations.*

Probable Chronology of the Life of Athanasius.

A.D.	
297.	Birth of Athanasius.
303.	Great persecution of Maximian.
318.	Writes *c. Gentes and De Incarn.*
321.	Arius excommunicated.
325.	Council of Nicaea.
326 or 328.	Election of Athanasius.
335.	Aug. Council of Tyre.
	Sept. Council of Jerusalem.
	Oct. 30. Athanasius at Constantinople.
336.	Feb. 5. Exile of Athanasius.
	Death of Arius.
337.	May 22. Death of Constantine.
?	Nov. 23. First return of Athanasius.
339.	Lent. Athanasius expelled by Philagrius.
340.	Council at Rome. Letter of Julius.
341.	Council of the Dedication at Antioch.
342.	Death of Eusebius of Nicomedia.
? 343.	Councils of Sardica and Philippopolis.
344.	"Makrostich Creed" issued at Antioch.
? 345.	Death of Gregory of Alexandria.
? 346.	Oct. 21. Second return of Athanasius.
350.	Jan. 18. Death of Constans.
353.	Council of Arles.
355.	Exile of Hosius and Liberius.
? 356.	Feb. 8. Athanasius expelled by Syrianus.
	Writes *Apol. ad Constantius* and *De Fug.*
358.	Writes *Hist. Arianorum ad Monachos.*

imprisonment rather than betray them.[1] As he published an elaborate theological book in 319, he could not have been born much after 297, and he tells us that he was trained in theology by confessors who had suffered from Pagan persecution.[2]

His parents were Christians, who occupied a good position in Alexandria. They were probably poor, but they gave him a thorough training both in secular and religious knowledge. He had studied grammar and rhetoric,[3] and his early book *Against the Gentiles* proves his familiarity with Homer and Plato. It is clear too that he was acquainted with Greek philosophy in its later forms, and that he had studied jurisprudence.[4] Though he always speaks of himself with singular modesty, he was evidently a man of liberal education.[5] But the knowledge which he valued most was extreme familiarity with the Scriptures, which he quotes with fulness and appositeness, and which he had studied with the aid of the best existing commentaries.

To a quick and lively boy, life in Alexandria was itself an education. He came in contact with all forms of commerce and of culture, with literary men from all countries, and with the votaries of many forms of Pagan and heretical belief.[6] He must have been a

PROBABLE CHRONOLOGY (*continued*).

A.D.	
359.	The "Dated Creed" of Sirmium.
	July 21. Council of Rimini.
	Sept. 27. Council of Seleucia.
	Oct. Council at Nikè.
	Dec. (?) Athanasius, *De Synodis.*
362.	Murder of George. Third return of Athanasius.
363.	June 26. Death of Julian.
366.	Fourth return of Athanasius.
373.	Death of Athanasius.

I have given the chronology adopted by Mr. Gwatkin in his *Arianism*, but have put a ? to the dates which are disputable.

[1] *Hist. Arian.* sec. 64. [2] *De Incarn.* 56. [3] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxi. [4] Sulp. Sev. ii. 36 ; comp. Soc. i. 31. [5] Newman, *Athan. Treatises*, i. 52. [6] See Ammian. xxii. 11, sec. 3.

daily witness of the dying superstitions of Egyptian Paganism, of the influence of Judaism in one of its most powerful centres, and of the conduct of Christians who had turned aside to various forms of heresy. In that teeming centre of life and speculation his faculties must have been trained and sharpened for what Hooker truly calls the "long tragedy" of his life.

That tragedy was materially influenced by events which occurred while he was still a little child. In the year 301 arose the Meletian schism of Egypt. Meletius was Bishop of Lycopolis, a see which in Egypt was only second in dignity to that of Alexandria, of which Peter was bishop from 300 to 311. During the persecution under Maximian Peter fled from his diocese, and Meletius unwarrantably took upon him to ordain priests in other dioceses, and to assume the functions of a primate.[1] Four bishops who were then in prison and were afterwards martyred protested against his conduct, but received no reply. Meletius, on the contrary, went to Alexandria, excommunicated two of Peter's presbyters, and, supported by Arius and Isidore, behaved with such contumacious arrogance that in 306 he was deposed by Peter and a synod of Egyptian bishops. Meletius, instead of obeying the mandate, at once put himself at the head of a schism which was denounced in 325 at the Council of Nice. Meletius himself, though condemned for rashness, levity, and disorderly conduct, was permitted to retain his see under certain restrictions; but in 326, when Athanasius was elected to the primacy, he threw in his lot with the Arians, and

[1] The titles Patriarch and Archbishop did not actually come into vogue till later. The bishops were often styled Father (*Papa*, see Routh, *Rell. Sacr.* iii. 235), but I sometimes use the title Archbishop or Patriarch to connote to modern readers the high authority of those who held the great metropolitan sees.

became so troublesome as to wring from the archbishop the exclamation, "Would to God he had never been received at Nicaea!" His followers did not die out till the fifth century.

Athanasius and the Church historian Socrates bring against Meletius the charge that during the persecution "he had denied the faith and sacrificed." It is no doubt difficult to understand how the Bishop of Lycopolis could so securely and arrogantly exercise his episcopal functions while other bishops were in prison and in exile; but, as the Nicene prelates are silent on this charge, we must give him the benefit of the doubt. Epiphanius tells us a very different story.[1] He says that Meletius and Peter were both in prison, with many other confessors, when a dissension arose about the method of treating those who had lapsed. Meletius took the stern view afterwards adopted by the Donatists, and treated clemency as a dangerous weakness. Peter adopted the milder view that they ought not to be driven into despair, but should be pardoned upon their repentance. After a vehement dispute, Peter spread his mantle on the prison floor and said, "Let all come here who agree with me." A few bishops, monks, and presbyters came and stood on the mantle, but by far the majority sided with Meletius.

We are not called upon to go fully into the obscure case of Meletius, but even the glamour of the great name of Athanasius must not lead us to be unfair to him. Let us lay down the rule in studying ecclesiastical history to ignore, or at the best to regard as uncertain, the accusations bandied between each other, without any evidence, by religious opponents. Many of them are entirely false; others are gross exaggerations; others are

[1] *Haer.* lviii.

one-sided misrepresentations of venial errors or defensible practices. Meletius probably supported the independence of the presbyters against episcopal encroachments; and neither of him, nor of Colluthus, nor even of Ischyras—with whose names we shall shortly meet—must we accept without hesitation the assertions of those to whom they were opposed.

The other event which threw its shadow over his young life was the arrival of Arius at Alexandria, from his Libyan home. The "melancholy, moon-struck giant" had been some time at Alexandria before his doctrines attracted attention. Had he not become an heresiarch he had all the views, gifts, and habits which would have marked him out as a saint. His countenance was pale, his expression sad, his locks dishevelled, his dress squalid, his manners gracious and sympathetic.[1] It is said that he originally sided with Meletius, and then went over to Peter, by whom he was ordained deacon, but afterwards (according to some) suspected. As a boy Athanasius must often have seen and perhaps have heard him, little conscious how prominent a part they two would have to play in the coming years.

In 311 the good Bishop Peter won the martyr's crown. In 306 another bishop, Phileas of Thmuis, had been martyred. If Athanasius did not witness the glorious end of these faithful Christians, his boyish mind cannot fail to have been impressed by the story of their courage.[2] Peter had firmly held and clearly taught the

[1] Even these personal traits, which are praised in others, are blamed in him as "animi tactra versantis indicium; artificium populi, spectaculorum amantis, gratiam captans." It is possible surely to reject as decisively as Athanasius himself the errors of Arius without needlessly trying to blacken his character. But this has been in all ages the deplorable method of theological controversy. Athanasius had to suffer from it all his life.

[2] Euseb. viii. 12, Athan. *De Incarn.* 27.

faith in Christ as One who "being by nature God, became by nature man." The story that Christ appeared to Peter in a dream with a garment rent by Arius, and told him to warn his successors against the new heresy, rests only on late and untrustworthy authority.

There can be no doubt that Athanasius received a careful training in the orthodox faith. Such a training was eminently necessary in a city like Alexandria, where Jews and Gentiles were alike ready with their calumnies and jeers against truths for which Christians gladly gave their lives.[1] Happily his theological studies went on in the midst of deep spiritual influences of other kinds. It is said that one of the strongest of these was his friendship with the hermit Antony,[2] whom "for some time he

[1] *De Incarn.* 1 : περὶ τῆς θείας αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐπιφανείας . . . ἣν Ιουδαῖοι μὲν διαβάλλουσιν Ἕλληνες δὲ χλευάζονται, ἡμεῖς δὲ προσκυνοῦμεν.

[2] I must reluctantly acknowledge a deepening uncertainty about any single fact in the life of Antony. Our sole authority is the *Vita Antonii*. It is confessedly interpolated. If it prove to be in no sense the work of Athanasius,—and, above all, if it be a novel and nothing else—it must be dropped out of sight. It had a most momentous influence, but is surrounded by suspicious circumstances. There is not so much as a *trace* of Antony's existence in any contemporary writer, not even in Eusebius and Athanasius ; for if the *Vita Antonii* be spurious, and the *History of the Arians* (*e.g.* 14) interpolated, the testimony of Athanasius, which in other respects involves difficulties, disappears. He alludes to him nowhere else, not even in the letter to Dracontius, where we should have certainly expected to find his name, and his alleged reverence for even deacons. *The Life of Antony* reads like none of the genuine works of Athanasius, though it must, in any case, have been written before 375 ; it is *full* of miracles (for which Athanasius shows no credulity elsewhere) and those very puerile ones, which he would have been too sensible to record. The same may be said of the grotesque demonology. The legend of the hermit also abounds in flagrant contradictions. Gregory of Nazianzus (soon after 380) was deceived by the pseudonym of Athanasius, but seems to have regarded the book as a romance (τοῦ μοναδικοῦ βίου νομοθεσίαν ἐν πλάσματι διηγήσεως, *Orat.* xxi.) Augustine and Rufinus knew nothing of its authorship ; Jerome only attributes it to Athanasius in the *Catalogus* (*circ.* 393). Eusebius knows *nothing* about Antony (the reference in the *Chronica* being due to Jerome), and Basil, and even Didymus, are profoundly silent. On the whole, we must accept the story of him with

attended, and poured water upon his hands."[1] It was from Antony that he is supposed to have caught the fervour of the monastic idea, and when he was called to the episcopal throne of Alexandria while still a young man, he was regarded by the people as "one of the ascetics." The cheerfulness, the wisdom, the rosy, healthy countenance, the beautiful sayings, the tender sympathy attributed by legend to the great hermit, would present the life of monks and solitaries in its most fascinating aspect to the ardent soul of the young Alexandrian. His familiarity with the desert, and the love felt for him by the dwellers in its recesses, were the means of his deliverance from the machinations of his enemies in after years. A writer who assumed the name of Athanasius tells the story or romance of Antony's daring appearance in Alexandria, where all men knew him by sight, during the persecutions, and how he stood in his white sheepskin cloak and confronted the Praefect without the slightest fear.[2] These stories are of extremely dubious authenticity, and Antony—if a hermit of that name existed at all—belongs mainly to the realm of religious fiction.

In 312, after the brief episcopate of Achillas, Alexander was chosen to the metropolitan see. Shortly after his election occurred the incident which has been believed on the sole authority of Rufinus.[3] The Aquileian

profound suspicion. See Gwatkin's *Arians*, pp. 98-101 ; Weingarten's *Ursprung des Mönchthums*, Gotha, 1877. I have given further reasons more fully in the *Contemp. Rev.* 1887.

[1] If all accounts are true, this is a somewhat suspicious circumstance, for (unhappily) most hermits were very averse to ablutions of any kind.

[2] Athan. *Vit. Ant.* 16.

[3] Rufin. *H. E.* i. 14. The authority of Rufinus is indeed shaken by the follies recorded in his *Historia Monachorum*, but certainly neither he nor his Alexandrian informants would have *invented* this very unecclesiastical story.

presbyter, who visited Alexandria in 372, and must have talked to some who had known Athanasius, tells us that one day Alexander had been keeping the "birthday" of his martyred predecessor Peter, and was expecting some of his clergy to a banquet at his house. His windows looked towards the sea, and as he stood gazing out of them towards the present harbour he saw a group of boys upon the shore. They were playing at Church ceremonies, and, thinking that they were going a little too far, he called some of the clergy to witness the scene, and then sent them to bring the boys into his presence. After a little pressure, the boys admitted that in play they had made Athanasius bishop, and that he had baptized some of them, who were catechumens, by immersion in the sea, with all legitimate forms. Finding that the questions had been duly put and the answers correctly given, the Archbishop—so we may call him—determined to recognise the baptism as valid, but to follow it up by confirmation. He summoned the parents of the boys who had acted as presbyters, and recommended that they should be trained for holy orders. He allowed Athanasius to finish his education, and then retained him in his own house, even as Samuel was brought up in the Temple of the Lord. Sozomen adds that the youth became his secretary and amanuensis.[1]

The story is strange, but it rests on good and almost contemporary authority. Even if it cannot have occurred before Athanasius was sixteen, it does not seem im-

[1] Sozom. ii. 17. De Broglie calls Rufinus and Sozomen "Deux auteurs habituellement véridiques," and is inclined to accept the truth of the story. Tillemont, Montfaucon, and most Romanists reject it. Dean Stanley points out that to this day in the Coptic Church an almost sacred importance is attached to the acts of children. See the remark of Socr. i. 15, who says that "*many* similar events have often occurred."

possible. Hefele accepts it,[1] as does also Dean Stanley. The Benedictine editors think it incredible that Alexander should have attached such serious importance to a boyish game; but rebaptism was regarded with horror, the boys seem to have looked upon what they did as something better than play, and if so learned a presbyter as Rufinus saw nothing incredible in the story, there seems no reason for wholly rejecting it. It is certain that Athanasius, while still little more than a boy, took his place as a favoured member of the household of Alexander, lived with him "as a son with a father,"[2] and thus spent some active and fruitful years in the centre of ecclesiastical activity under the roof of a prelate whose authority was reverenced by more than a hundred bishops of Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis.

He was still a young man when he wrote his treatise *Against the Gentiles.* It is a refutation of heathenism and a defence of monotheism, and gives us a great impression of his originality and quickness of mind.[3] The first part is devoted to an exposure of the absurd beliefs which many Pagans professed; in the second he is constructive, and argues in favour of One God revealed in Christ. The theme is continued in his treatise *On the Incarnation,* which, though written at so early an age, is doubly remarkable—both because it shows with unwonted clearness an intensely fervid consciousness of the truth that all Christianity centres in One Divine Person, and also because it is one of the earliest attempts to present this Christian truth in a philosophically religious form.[4]

[1] Hefele, *Hist. of Councils,* ii. c. 2, sec. 25. [2] Cyril. Alex. *Ep.* 1.

[3] Villemain quotes passages of this treatise with great admiration. In it occurs the striking sentence, "Polytheism is atheism," sec. 38.

[4] Möhler, *Athan. der Grosse;* Dorner, *Person of Christ;* Bright, *Orations of St. Athanasius,* p. ix.

IX

Continued

THE DAWN OF ARIANISM

"Παρεισάξουσιν αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας."—2 Pet. ii. 1.

SECTION II

It was not till the year 319, after these treatises had shown the bent of the young deacon's mind, that Alexander was informed of the heretical speculations of his presbyter Arius. Those speculations produced an immense effect on the history of the Church.

Is it not possible to condemn them as erroneous in themselves, and dangerous in their consequences—which assuredly they were—and yet to remember that they may have been quite sincerely held in honest ignorance? In judging of Arius as a man and as a theologian, is it not admissible to feel the clearest conviction of the misfortunes which he caused to the Church without accepting the violent invectives which have been heaped upon him? Even Cave, echoing the maledictions of his enemies, says that he came from Libya, "a country fruitful in monstrous and unnatural productions," and that he was a man "of a turbulent and unquiet head, *which he veiled with a specious mask of sanctity.*" Why should Arius be taunted and sneered at by the Church historians for the

ascetic pallor and emaciation which they praise in other men?[1] We place Athanasius in the foremost rank of the champions of the true faith, but is it therefore necessary to speak with vindictive harshness of the character and views of Arius? Let us remember that his writings have not come down to us, so that we are the less able to estimate the sources of his error; and also that we possess no picture of him except such as is delineated by his strongest opponents. The Arians had no monopoly of intellectual error. The leaders of their party were hurried by religious zeal into disgraceful intrigue, and the life-long exasperation caused by innumerable wrongs at times leads Athanasius to forget his usual exquisite urbanity, and to call them "devils, Antichrists, polytheists, atheists, dogs, wolves, chameleons, hydras, eels, cuttlefrogs, gnats, beetles, and leeches." We may condone this human weakness, while yet we firmly reprobate the too common style of unchristian invective. To treat Arianism, which for half a century seemed likely to be victorious, as "a mere outbreak of unmeaning wickedness" is superficial and absurd.

Of Arius, the man, but little is known. He received his education under Lucian, the learned presbyter of Antioch, where he was a fellow-pupil with Eusebius of Nicomedia, whom he calls his fellow-Lucianist;[2] and pro-

[1] He is described as ὡς ὅλος ἠμιθνής. Epiphanius says, "he was shaped like a serpent, and like that too crafty and subtle, and that could easily wind and screw in himself." "If," says Erasmus, "I had lived in the time of Hilary ('the Athanasius of Gaul') I would have uttered warnings and teachings against the Arians, but I would not have called them Satans or Antichrists."

[2] The creed of Lucian, adopted at the Council of the Dedication, shows that he was orthodox. It is most unfair to charge Lucian or Antioch (which was a predominantly orthodox city) with Arianism or heresy; still more unfair to depreciate on that account the only sound school of patristic exegesis, as Newman does. Neither Diodorus of Tarsus nor Theodore of Mopsuestia were in any sense Arians. See

bably also of Maris of Chalcedon, Theognis of Nicaea, and Leontius of Antioch. Lucian was regarded as one of the founders of the famous Antiochene school of theology. He was the author of a revised version of the Septuagint, which was widely used in the Church, and of a creed adopted by the Council of Antioch in A.D. 341. Bishop Alexander charged him with being a follower of Paul of Samosata, and he had consequently been excluded from Church communion in 272. It is believed that he is the Lucian who perished in 311 with Bishop Peter of Alexandria in the persecution of Maximin.

What brought Arius to Alexandria we do not know, but he arrived there before 311, while Peter was yet bishop, and was ordained deacon by him. He is said to have remained on good terms both with him and his successor Achillas, and was ordained presbyter. He was already of mature age, and was now the rector of Baukalis, the oldest church and parish in Alexandria.[1] Here he had many followers who loved and admired him. He was known as an eloquent preacher and an acute reasoner.[2] His private virtues and ascetic life were admitted even by his enemies, who say that he was a man of melancholy temperament and dignified bearing, and that his voice had in it a peculiar charm.[3] He seems to have held the position of an exegete of Scripture and head of the Alexandrian presbyterate. The election to the bishopric lay between Alexander and himself.

Some years elapsed before Alexander heard any

Gwatkin, *Arians*, p. 18. Cardinal Hergenröther (*Kirchengesch.* i. 281) may be appealed to for a much fairer view of the school of Antioch than that given by Cardinal Newman.

[1] See Epiphan. *Haer.* lxix. 1-3. Baukalis is supposed to be a corruption of *βουκάλια*.

[2] *ἀνὴρ διαλεκτικώτατος.* [3] Theodoret, *H. E.* i. 2.

complaint of the teaching of his presbyter. Nay more, if we may accept the testimony of Arius and Eusebius, he had himself taught the same views. It must be remembered that the condemnation of these views as heretical was then by no means universal, and that language had been used which was so inaccurate as to lend itself readily to heretical interpretations. Alexander therefore may have been one who held *τὰ αἱρετικὰ καθολικῶς* until his views were rectified by the fuller knowledge of Athanasius, who seems by this time to have become his archdeacon. At any rate no complaint about Arius attracted serious notice before the year 319.

It is possible that other facts besides the question of heresy may have led to strained relations between Arius and his bishop. There had always been a party in the Church who maintained the independence of presbyters in relation to bishops. The schism of the Egyptian Meletius, the assertion by the presbyter Colluthus of the right of presbyters to ordain, and his actual ordination of Ischyras, who afterwards played so miserable a part in the story of Athanasius, point to grounds of dissension which were ecclesiastical rather than theological. Whether any dispute of this kind had already begun to embitter the once friendly intercourse of Arius with Alexander we cannot tell; but we have seen how the life of Origen was ruined by "episcopal envy," and Alexander took steps to crush Arius, which may indeed have been justified by the zeal of orthodoxy, but were perhaps hardly necessary to the maintenance of the truth. He charged Arius with jealousy, ambition, and love of money.[1] The charges may have been true or

[1] The Arian Philostorgius says that on the death of Achillas a majority of votes elected Arius as bishop, and that he voluntarily resigned the dignity in favour of Alexander (*προτιμήσαντα ἑαυτοῦ*, Philost. i. 3).

untrue, but they rest on the unsupported assertion of enemies. To brand an opponent with the worst motives, and to injure his character with baseless accusations has been a crime only too common among religious champions.

Be that, however, as it may, any minor matters of difference instantly disappeared in the earthquake of controversy which was let loose when Alexander began to examine the heresies of Arius. At first he spoke to him in private, and that on many occasions, but not unnaturally he produced no effect. Except when Athanasius stood by his side, we can easily imagine that Alexander was unable to cope with the logical skill for which Arius was renowned. The bishop found it necessary to summon a synod of his clergy. It met, and Arius, who had many followers, so far from offering any retractation of his views, endeavoured to support his own system—which regarded the Son as inferior and subordinate to the Father—by roundly charging the bishop with the Sabellianism which confounded the Persons of the Blessed Trinity. He insisted that the very name Father inevitably implied priority,[1] hence that the Son must once have been non-existent; —that "there was (a time) when He was not;"[2] hence that He must be "a creature or created Being"; that, as a creature, He could not even fathom His own Being; that in essence the Father and the Son are "utterly unlike, to all infinity"; that there could, consequently, be no *identity* but only a *resemblance* of nature between the Father and Son;—to which, when pressed,

[1] As Canon Bright (Tr. s. x.) truly says, he viewed the "generation" of the Son as an *event*, whereas the Catholic doctrine views it as an eternal *fact* in the Divine life.

[2] Athan. *Orat. c. Arian.* i. 6, ἀνόμοιοι πάμπαν . . . ἐπ' ἄπειρον.

he added the horrifying conclusions that the Son did not perfectly know the Father, and even that, like the Archangels, He was created liable to fall,—though this last inference seems to have been early and sincerely retracted. Nevertheless, Arianism wore a most specious aspect. It was not dualistic, like the heresy of Marcion. It repudiated the aeons of Valentinus. It did not deny outright the Divinity of Christ, as Cerinthus had done. It claimed to be ancient, orthodox, Scriptural, and a necessary protection to the doctrine of the Unity of God. But the fact remained that Arianism showed affinities to Paganism; Christ—if indeed he was "a creature," "one" (as Athanasius of Anazarbus ventured to say) "of the hundred sheep"—became nothing but a demigod—a Hercules or an Osiris. Thus the Arians were practically polytheists, who worshipped the creature and believed in two Gods; or—for this was "a many-headed heresy"—they were also practically atheists, and denied to the Lord His perfect Godhead.[1] But consciously they were neither. Many of them were sincere in their error, and to them is due no small share in the mission work, on the success of which depended the future of the world. Let us not forget that in an age when Sabellianism was regarded by many honest and earnest minds as the chief source of danger, Arianism at least helped to defeat that confusion and to establish the separate Personality of the Son of God.

Such was the influence of Arius, so numerous his followers, so indefinite the then formulae of belief, so little able were ordinary minds to meet the difficulties which were raised, and so great was the dread of being

[1] See Athan. *Orat.* iii. sec. 16 (Newman, p. 422). The Semi-Arians tried to avoid the dilemma by speaking of Christ neither as God nor as a creature, but ὡς ἓν τῶν γεννημάτων.

driven by reaction into Sabellian views that the synod came to no result. It was, however, impossible for Alexander to stay where he was, nor—had he been thus inclined—was it likely that Athanasius would acquiesce in his doing so. Just as at Byzantium, the very bakers and barbers discussed over their bargains the deepest and subtlest problems of theology, so at Alexandria rude Arians asked silly women in their homes, "Pray, had you a son before you were a mother?"[1]—stupidly and flippantly confusing the eternal and divine relations between the Eternal Father and the Eternal Son with those of human life. "They call themselves Christians," indignantly exclaims Athanasius, "yet they change the glory of God in the likeness of the image of corruptible man."[2]

Alexander saw that if he did not counteract the specious jeers of Arian sophistry, the ignorant would be hopelessly misled. He therefore "issued a circular letter directed against Arius and his followers, in which he spoke with the utmost vehemence of their impious, godless doctrine," and called upon all Christians to hold themselves aloof from the enemies of Christ. To this document he required the signatures of his clergy, that the Alexandrian Church might be purged from all complicity with the "new" doctrine.[3]

Arius, on his side, did his best to organise his adherents. They met for mutual counsel, and Alexander angrily describes this as "building for themselves holes of thieves and robbers, where they held incessant

[1] Athan. *Orat.* i. 22: εἰσερχόμενοι πρὸς γυναικάρια πάλιν αὐταῖς ἐκτεθηλυμένα ῥήματα φθέγγονται Εἰ εἶχες υἱὸν πρὶν τέκῃς;

[2] Rom. i. 23.

[3] The document is signed by thirty priests and forty deacons. It is given in Socr. i. 6, and contains some very curious specimens of Old Testament exegesis.

gatherings, and indulged day and night in blasphemies against Christ and insults against himself." Among the followers of Arius were Pistus, afterwards appointed a sort of anti-pope in Alexandria by a Eusebian synod during one of the exiles of Athanasius; and Eustathius, afterwards Bishop of Sebaste, who was for so long a time a thorn in the side of Basil. It was obvious that things could not remain in this condition, and in 321 Alexander summoned a council of a hundred bishops of Egypt, Mareotis, Pentapolis, and Libya, which Arius and his friends personally attended to answer the charges against them. It was the first of many anti-Arian councils, the first formal condemnation of a heresy which practically denied the reality of a Divine Redeemer. Arianism stood on a different footing altogether from the brief and partial errors of Eutychians, Apollinarians, and Nestorians. They might be called diseases, but Arianism was "madness."[1] Yet it exercised a long and powerful influence. The whole Gothic nation was converted by the Arian bishop Ulfila. Alaric, the first conqueror of Rome, and Genseric, the first conqueror of Africa, and Theodoric the Great, and the Lombards, were Arians. The heresy died slowly. Its future was far from hopeless till the fall of the Gothic power in Aquitaine (507) and Italy (553); and the long contest was ended only by the conversion of the Visigoths and Lombards at the end of the sixth century.[2] "A theory which was to show a vitality so tenacious, an activity so versatile, to fight a long battle with the Church of the fourth century, to win a dominion among barbaric races, to hold Spain until the latter years of the sixth century, to start up after long slumbers amid the confusions of the sixteenth, to mould the belief

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xx. 5. [2] Gwatkin, *Arians*, p. 2.

of Milton and of Newton, to claim a home for itself in the Church of England in the person of Samuel Clarke, to task the energies of such a foe as Waterland,[1] to 'confront Trinitarianism in a royal presence,' and to leave a deep mark on Irish Presbyterianism—such a theory, however unsatisfactory to reason, however repulsive to piety and to faith, must needs have been formidable when it first spoke out and called forth Athanasius as its adversary. And it was his intense conviction that Christ was God Incarnate, and that His absolute claim on the devotion of Christian souls was at stake in the strife with Arius which made Athanasius strong to meet the challenge."[2]

Arius was condemned by the synod, and with him two bishops, Secundus and Theonas, and eleven deacons. The condemnation was sent far and wide by Alexander in an encyclical letter which was signed by a large number of presbyters and deacons. He strove in this way to forewarn the Church against Eusebius of Nicomedia, whose powerful influence would, he was well aware, be exercised against him, and who, as bishop of the see where Constantine held his court, was a formidable opponent. Then began a war of counter-efforts. Eusebius tried in vain to induce Alexander to receive back Arius into his communion. The Bishop of Alexandria, always supported by Athanasius, remained firm, and Arius retired first to Palestine and then to Nicomedia, and not only by means of letters but by his famous *Thalia*, in which verse was mingled with prose, and by other songs and poems, tried to win over the

[1] Waterland, *Works*, i. 78.

[2] Bright, *Orations of St. Athan.* xiii. In these deep controversies we have always to be on our guard against "the fatal force and fascination of words." Even Τριὰς and *Trinitas* have not *exactly* the same connotation.

multitude to his views. This task was all the more easy because Arius practically endeavoured to render more explicable the mystery of the Trinity, and, in order to win the multitude, adopted (it is said) the detestable expedient of disseminating his heresies in rhythm hitherto associated with the infamous songs of Sotades.[1] The local dispute soon agitated the entire Christian Church, and among those who favoured his opinions Arius could count many virgins, presbyters, and bishops. Of these the most noted was the presbyter Georgius, the bishops Maris of Chalcedon, Paulinus of Tyre, Theodotus of Laodicea, and the two Eusebiuses —for the famous Bishop of Caesarea, as well as the Bishop of Nicomedia, lent to this cause the weight of his ability. Arius himself seems to have used language which more or less concealed from the unwary the real issues of his heresy.

Until these mysterious verities had been carefully defined at Nice, they were far beyond the grasp of ordinary minds to hold with theological accuracy. Hitherto, no doubt, the doctrine of the Trinity had been to many minds so vague as to seem—with perfect innocence, because from an ignorance which was as yet inevitable—consistent either with an Arian Trinity of one Supreme and two Subordinate Beings; or a Sabellian Trinity of temporal aspects (*πρόσωπα* "Persons") of the one

[1] Fragments are preserved in Athan. *Orat. c. Arian.* i. 4. They are as unlike popular poems as anything that can be conceived. If they were written in Sotadean metres, it is almost inconceivable that those metres were exclusively appropriated to licentious themes. Rowland Hill, however, said that "he did not see why the devil should be suffered to have all the best tunes," and some such thought may have been in the mind of Arius, who is represented to us as an austere presbyter. Apollinaris of Laodicea also disseminated his heresies in songs; and modern hymns abound, if not in heresy, yet in false theology. Augustine wrote "a psalm" to refute the Donatists (*Retract.* i. 20).

God; as well as with the Trinity of the Catholic faith which sees eternal distinctions (ὑποστάσεις) in the Unity of the Divine nature. The West leaned more nearly to Sabellianism, the East to subordination. Many Eastern bishops regarded Christ as a *secondary* God, and distinguished between *derivative* and *absolute* divinity, though the condemnation of Paul of Samosata might seem to have established the Eternal Godhead of the Son.[1] If we would fairly judge the controversies of the fourth century we must bear in mind the fact, pointed out by St. Thomas Aquinas, that it is not easy to keep clear of imagining too great a *separation* of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, which ends in tritheism; or too great an *identification*, which is the error of the Sabellians.

There had been in the Church a body of men, who, in the interest of "Monarchianism" and the absolute unity of God, regarded the deeper views of Christ's Divine nature as springing only from theological speculation. Praxeas, the opponent of Tertullian, Beryllus of Bostra, whose views were controverted by Origen, Noetus, and Sabellius—little as we know of them at first hand—seem to have belonged to this party at different times, and Paul of Samosata went further in the same direction. Arianism was a revival of their views—a reassertion of the subordination of the Son, as a protest against the growing definiteness of the belief that the Father and the Son were of the same substance. No less a person than Dionysius of Alexandria, whom Athanasius calls the "teacher of the Catholic Church," at one time was supposed to lean to these opinions;[2] at any rate in controverting Sabellianism he used terms

[1] See Gwatkin's *Arians*, pp. 9, 14; Zahn, *Marcellus* 14, and the correspondence of Dionysius of Rome and of Alexandria.

[2] Athanasius (*De Sent. Dionys.*) defends his orthodoxy.

which the Arians quoted in their own favour, and which led Basil to say that "he sowed the seeds of the Anomoean heresy,"[1] *i.e.* of the heresy which declared that the Son was of *unlike* substance with the Father. In writing, however, to his namesake of Rome Dionysius explained his views in an orthodox sense.[2]

Arius could thus appeal to sentences in the writings of his predecessors, nor must it be supposed that he wilfully and wickedly chose error in preference to truth. The arguments which he adduced from Scripture were indeed refuted by Athanasius, and have been refuted again and again by the deepest insight of Christian exegesis, but it is not hard to see what perplexity they may have caused in the early ages of Christianity to ill-instructed minds. The strength of Arius in dialectics lay in the necessary shadows and imperfections of finite language to express infinite realities. He seized on the word "the Son" as necessarily implying posteriority, inferiority, and material generation; and the vagueness of the title "the Word" helped him to obliterate the Divine and Eternal Personality. He appealed to the rigid monotheism of the Old Testament, echoing from beginning to end the declaration that "The Lord our God is one God."[3] He quoted from the New Testament such verses as "my Father is

[1] *Ep.* i. 9.

[2] Dionysius, in one of his letters, had said that "The Son was *made* . . . is alien in essence from the Father, as the vine from the husbandman . . . and, as made, He was not before He came into being." It must be confessed that such language required explanation, and was naturally quoted as Arian. But Dionysius had been arguing against the Sabellians, and in his "Refutation and Defence" to his namesake of Rome quoted language of his own of a quite opposite direction, and explained that he was only alluding to Christ's *manhood*. The explanations of Dionysius and Athanasius (*De Synod.* secs. 43, 44) are not quite satisfactory. See Dorner, *Person of Christ*, ii. 178 (E.T.); Neale i. 75, 121.

[3] Deut. vi. 4; xxxii. 39.

greater than I,"[1] and "who is . . . the first-born of every creature,"[2] and "being made so much better than the angels,"[3] and "God hath made Jesus both Lord and Christ,"[4] and "who was faithful to Him that appointed (lit. *made*) Him."[5] Further, he dwelt on the proof of the perfect humanity of Jesus, and explained such passages as "I and my Father are one" in a religious and moral sense. A well-instructed Christian child could now refute these arguments by turning to any good commentary, and Arius himself was pressed into such inconsistency by the force of the arguments urged against him as to draw a distinction between a sort of metaphysical Logos and Jesus Christ; so that like those against whom St. John warns us he "severed Jesus,"[6] and reduced the whole work of redemption to an interior process. Like the Ebionites, he denied the full divinity of Christ; like the Docetists, he, or his followers, obliterated His humanity. "The Lord's deity had been denied often enough before, and so had His humanity; but it was reserved for Arianism at once to affirm and nullify them both."[7] Athanasius, on the other hand, though well aware that the word *Homoousios*—"of the *same* substance with the Father"—was a comparatively new term in Christian theology, and that the language of earlier writers had been inexact, yet urged against Arius with irresistible force such passages as "This is my beloved Son," "the Word was God," "the only

[1] John xiv. 28. [2] Col. i. 15. [3] Heb. i. 4. [4] Acts ii. 36.

[5] Heb. iii. 2. He also quoted Prov. viii. 22.

[6] 1 John iv. 3, λύει Ἰησοῦν. See the writer's *Early Days of Christianity*, ii. 447.

[7] See Gwatkin's *Arians*, p. 27. In his *Thalia* Arius said, εἰ δὲ καὶ λέγεται θεός, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀληθινός ἐστιν (*ap.* Ath. *Orat.* i. 6). Hence he said, "There was" (he would not add the word "a time" but left the phrase perfectly abstract) "when He was not." The Father was Ingenerate (ἀγέννητος), but not the Son.

begotten of the Father," "all things were made by him," and many others both of the Old and New Testament, such as Ps. ii. 7; xlv. 2; cx. 3; cxlv. 13; Matt. iii. 17; xxviii. 19; John i. 1, 8, 14; x. 30; xiv. 9, 10; Rom. i. 20; viii. 32; ix. 5; 1 John v. 20; Heb. i. 12; xiii. 8. He showed that the texts quoted by Arius were inapplicable, misrendered, or applicable only to Jesus in His simple humanity; and with consequent and powerful trains of reasoning he explained the whole philosophy of the plan of salvation as indicated in Scripture and set forth in the Catholic faith. He would not rest his case at all on tradition, but on truth, yet he could appeal to the writings of Origen, of Theognostos, and of Dionysius of Alexandria. Arius regarded Christianity as a subjective revelation, the offspring mainly of man's spirit; Athanasius accepted it as the revelation of divine, eternal, objective facts. Athanasius saw with intellectual clearness that Arianism was practically *ditheistic* in worshipping two gods of unequal dignity; that it arose from the desire to rationalise insoluble mysteries; and that, in its ultimate issues, though detestable to the Jews as involving the worship of a created being, it was yet akin to the Judaism which had crucified the Lord because of His claims to the divine nature. He saw no less clearly that the belief in Christ as "truly God" was taught by Scripture, was implied in His unique Sonship, was necessary to the efficacy of the redemption, and had always been the essential doctrine of the Christian Church. To him the statement that the Son was mutable (τρεπτός) was shocking. "Quod Deo *minus* est," says Augustine, "Deus non est." This was the exact view of Athanasius. He pressed the Arians with the dilemma, "Either admit that the Son is of the same

substance with the Father, or say openly that He is a creature — in which case He cannot be worshipped." It may have been pardonable in a half-pagan soldier like Constantine to treat the dispute as one of mere words; but, while Arianism began by attempting to establish Christian doctrines, it ended by subverting each and all of them. It obscured the divinity of Christ and gave Him but a fantastic humanity. It destroyed the bridge of real communication between man and God, and left mankind without a revelation and without an atonement.

Before three years had elapsed from the outbreak of the discussion, the whole Christian world was in a ferment of excitement. The songs of Arius were heard on the lips of fishermen and pedlars, while at the same time his views formed a topic of heated debate among bishops and rulers. Alexander wrote some seventy letters on the subject. The very theatres of Byzantium began to ring with jokes on the divisions of Christians.[1] Bishops were dashing against bishops, and dioceses against dioceses, says Eusebius, like the Symplegades on a day of storm.[2] But there was one man who was prepared to make the question vital to the very existence of Christianity, and that man was Athanasius. He was an inmate of Alexander's house; he was his secretary, ate at his table, worked in his study, and inspired his most strenuous exertions. Against him the chief fury of the Arians was bent. It was intolerable to them that their giant champion should be met and foiled at every turn by the diminutive opponent whom, like the Emperor Julian, they were inclined to despise as "not even a man, but only a paltry mannikin";[3]

[1] Socr. i. 7; Euseb. *Vit. Const.* iv. 60. [2] *Vit. Const.* iii. 4.
[3] Julian, *Ep.* li. μὴ δὲ ἀνήρ, ἀλλ' ἀνθρωπίσκος εὐτελής.

and yet they knew that they had everything to fear from his mixture of "magnetic attractiveness with adamantine firmness."

The Emperor Constantine frequently heard about the controversy from his sister Constantia, and from her adviser Eusebius of Nicomedia. The air was full of the complaints of Arius and the denunciations of Alexander. Constantine at last had leisure to turn his thoughts to a question which, as it threatened turbulence in Egypt, was to him of great political importance. In Sept. 323 he defeated Licinius at Chrysopolis, and the world was at his feet. He felt that it was time for him to interfere, and in a burst of angry impatience, in which something of a catechumen's humility is not wholly unmingled with the disdain of a politician, he wrote his singular letter to Alexander and Arius. Anxious for unanimity and peace, he had been already vexed by the beginnings of the Donatist schism in Africa, and here he says is a new scene of discord. "And there is no real ground for it. The subjects in dispute are trivial (ἐλάχισται ζητήσεις). I offer myself as arbiter. You, Alexander, asked the opinion of your presbyters on a question of little importance, and you, Arius, have propounded an opinion which you never ought to have held, or at any rate to have uttered. Hence has come disunion and faction. I, your fellow-servant, urge you to forgive each other, equally for the unguarded question and the inconsiderate answer. It is a pity that the question was ever raised. No Christianity requires the investigation of such subjects; they arise from the disputatious cavils of ill-employed leisure. Few can adequately understand these difficult matters, in which there ought to be mutual tolerance. In reality you are agreed. Return to your former

charity, and restore to me my quiet days and tranquil nights, or you will force me to weep and to despair of any personal peace. Your discords alone prevent me from paying a visit to the East."[1]

So strongly was Constantine moved that nothing but the dread of exciting some disastrous tumult prevented him from going in person to Alexandria. He contented himself (A.D. 324) with sending Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, to act as his representative, while from the point of view of an unbaptized and ill-instructed layman, he failed to see any importance in the question which had been raised.[2]

Hosius could only speak Latin, and that of a provincial kind. He knew no Greek, and had to be instructed in the technical meaning of the Greek words *ousia* (Being) and *hypostasis* (Substance), which he mispronounced. The polished Alexandrian dialecticians laughed at him in their sleeves. But his strong and simple nature was not to be cajoled into ignoring a catholic verity, and it is clear that he must have pronounced against Arius. Arius then wrote to the Emperor a letter in which, with great want of tact, he boasted somewhat menacingly of the number of his adherents.[3] About the same time an Arian mob pelted and broke some of the imperial statues. Constantine, in extreme anger, sent to the Praefect of Egypt a singular manifesto, which he ordered him to publish. It was addressed to Arius and his followers. He puns on the name of Arius, calls him a great Arês (Mars), and advises him to get a buckler, or to take refuge in the company of Venus. He begins by

[1] This curious letter, about what he stigmatises as a λίαν εὐήθης ζήτησις, is given at length by Socrates (*H. E.* i. 7).

[2] Socr. iii. 8. Arius himself talks about περισσολογίαι.

[3] So we judge from the reply of Constantine in Gelasius of Cyzicus, *De Concil. Niceno*, p. 206 (ed. Paris, 1599).

telling him—perhaps with reference to the official position of Scriptural interpreter which Arius had held—"'That a bad exegete is the work and image of the devil.' The cry which has so often escaped from the detestable throat of Arius is, 'What must I do if no one will receive me?' But why is he so obscure and serpentine in his utterances? He looks sweet and calm, but the spirit of evil has made him after his own heart, a perfect magazine of crimes." After more objurgations to Arius and his "miserable Arians" in this extraordinary style, the Emperor resorts to the syllogism of violence, and tells them that they shall pay a tenfold capitation tax till they return to the faith. "As for you, man of iron, let me know what you want. If you have a clear conscience, come to me, the man of God, and I will sound your heart. If I find that this madness has sunk deep, I will ask God's grace and will heal you of this venomous bite. If you seem to me of a sound spirit, recognising in you the light of the truth I will give thanks for it to God, and shall congratulate myself on my piety."

This astounding composition was placarded in most of the cities of Asia, and inspired some terror. But the courtiers of Constantine knew that a good deal of his anger was more personal than theological, and summoned Arius to Nicomedia. He no longer assumed the haughty tone of defiance which had disgusted the Emperor, but entangled him in the network of technicality and dialectics. The perplexed soldier could not tell what to do except to make Arius swear that he would not fall again into his errors.[1] He broke off the conference with the remark that "He felt sure God would not fail to confound the imposture of Arius if he deceived him, or concealed anything."

[1] Epiphan. *Haer.* lxix. 9.

But even now Arianism continued to make way, and at last there dawned on the mind of Constantine the sublime determination—so momentous for the whole history of Christianity—of summoning the first Œcumenical Council, the bishops of the habitable earth, to oppose to the invisible enemy of the Church the battalions of a divine phalanx.[1]

[1] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* iii. 4-6.

IX

Continued

THE COUNCIL OF NICE[1]

"Compellimur haereticorum . . . vitiis illicita agere, ardua scandere, ineffabilia loqui, inconcessa praesumere."—Hil. *De Trin.* ii. 1.

SECTION III

"The history of the Ante-Nicene age," it has been said, "is the history of the World against the Church; the history of the Post-Nicene age is the history of the World in the Church." The World was powerless against the Church as an antagonist; but became far more dangerous as a false ally.

[1] The authorities are very numerous, but many of them are far from trustworthy. They are:—1. The original documents—the creed, the twenty canons, and the official letters of Constantine and others (Mansi, ii. 625-701). 2. The account given by Eusebius (*Life of Constantine*, iii. 4-24, and letter to the Church of Caesarea in Theodoret, i. 9), the writings of Athanasius, and a few allusions from other contemporary writers. 3. The Church historians of the next generation—Rufinus, Ambrose, Epiphanius, Socrates, Sozomen, Philostorgius (an Arian), and Theodoret. 4. Later historians, like Gelasius. Modern accounts of the council are given by Gibbon (ch. xxi.), Milman (*Hist. of Christianity*, ii. 431-448), Bishop Kaye (*Some Account of the Council of Nicaea*, 1853), Ittig, Walch, Hefele, Tillemont, Fleury, De Broglie, Stanley, Newman, Bright, and the writers of Church histories. It is remarkable that our accounts come from the orthodox side (Athanasius), the Arian (Philostorgius), the Semi-Arian (Eusebius of Caesarea), the Novatian (Auxano, a boy-attendant on Acesius), two laymen (Socrates, Sozomen), and a Broad-Church bishop (Theodoret).

The Emperor sent courteous letters of invitation to the chief bishops, especially those of the East, and after a long interval the world was to see once more a free assembly. This was but one of the many facts which constituted the grandeur of the Council of Nice. It was among the earliest precedents of the principle of representative government. For more than three centuries no voice emanating from the conscience had made itself heard in the silence of absolutism—a silence which was only broken by the wearisome panegyrics of rhetoricians or by the groan of victims. For the first time in the memory of so many generations the world was about to see men of worth, full of the sentiment of their personal dignity, strong in their respectful independence, rally round the person of the master of the world, neither to flatter nor to betray, but to deliberate under his eyes without constraint.[1] The council was to be no comedy of legality or of violence, such as had been witnessed so often on the agitated stage of the Empire. It spoke in the language of sincerity, and awoke a long-forgotten consciousness of the rights of freedom.

The place of meeting was well chosen. It was central; it was so ancient that Ammianus calls it "the mother of the cities of Bithynia";[2] and it was not far from the royal residence of Nicomedia. Its name, too, was derived from Victory; it bore an image of Victory upon its coins, a fact which the Emperor regarded as being of the happiest omen, and to which he was fond of alluding. But for his victory over Licinius the Council would have been impossible.

The preparations for the assembly were made on a splendid scale. The Emperor placed the public vehicles

[1] De Broglie, ii. 14. [2] Amm. Marc. xxvi. 1.

at the service of the bishops and their attendants, and bore the whole expense of their maintenance. They came, says Theodoret, in carriages and on mules and horses and asses, with a speed which marked their extreme excitement. Christians met for the first time whose names had been honoured since the dreadful days of persecution. They assembled to the number, says Athanasius, of "300, more or less." Christian tradition fixed on the number 318, and connected it with the number of armed servants with which Abraham had delivered Lot from captivity, and also with the Greek letters which stood for it, TIH', in which they loved to recognise the symbol of the Cross followed by the two first letters of the name of Jesus.[1]

The first meeting of the assembly—the concourse of men whose widely separated homes and differing languages furnished a striking proof of the triumph and expansion of the faith—must have been a very memorable scene. It reminded Eusebius of the gathering at Pentecost. There might be seen the young and the old, the courtier and the confessor, the noble and the peasant, the learned and the illiterate; and in attendance upon them were venerable presbyters and youthful deacons and even boyish acolytes. There sat Paphnutius, Bishop of the Thebaid, who halted to his seat, trailing a leg of which the sinews had been cut while he toiled in the mines of a successor, and showing by his seared and hollow eye-socket the anguish he had undergone in the Diocletian persecution. There Paul, Bishop of the Mesopotamian Neocaesarea, uplifted in benediction a

[1] A Coptic MS. says that whenever they rose there were always 319, and they at last understood that the Holy Spirit was present visibly among them! Tillemont (vi. 916) reckons 2048 as the number of *ecclesiastics* present. Socrates (i. 8) says that the number of presbyters, deacons, and acolytes was "almost incalculable."

hand which the fire had scorched. There was Potamon, Bishop of Heraclea, who had known the earliest hermits and lived in the deserts of the Nile. There the rude figure of James of Nisibis, in his coat of camel's hair, recalled the aspect and the manner of life of John the Baptist. There sat the simple shepherd-bishop, Spiridion of Cyprus, who had been brought, like David, from following his ewes great with young ones.[1] The Persian John, who, like our Bishops of Calcutta, was called the Metropolitan of India, and the fair-haired Goth Theophilus, the teacher of Ulfilas, from the far north, were present, with Cathirius, from the Bosphorus, to testify that Christianity had won its way even among barbarous nations. There was Leontius of Caesarea, who had just baptized the father of Gregory of Nazianzus; and Hypatius of Gangra, destined hereafter to be stoned to death by the fury of the Novatians; and Acesius, a Novatian bishop, attended by a boy Auxano, who afterwards, as an old man, narrated his reminiscences to Socrates.

Caecilian of Carthage and other bishops of the West had come to take their part in the definition of the faith; and Sylvester of Rome, too aged to bear the fatigue of the journey, was represented by his two presbyters Victor and Vincent.[2] Among these simpler Christians were some of the most learned prelates of the East. The supple and influential Eusebius of Nicomedia, the friend of the Princess Constantia; the learned and highly respected Eusebius of Caesarea, the friend of the Emperor;

[1] He is the patron saint of Corfu, where his body is still preserved, and where we may still gaze "on the dead hands, now black and withered, that subscribed the creed of Nicaea."—Stanley, p. 110. The Church historians, beginning with Rufinus, are full of legends about him.

[2] There do not seem to have been more than seven Western bishops present.

Theodorus of Tarsus, from the schools of Athens; Eustathius of Antioch, destined to be persecuted alike by Pagans and by Christians; Marcellus of Ancyra, who, in his impetuous opposition to Arius, all but rebounded into the opposite heresy of Sabellius, and laid himself open to severe condemnation.[1] Persistent traditions also assert the presence of Nicolas of Myra, the legendary friend of sailors, of children, and of thieves—"known by his broad red face and flowing white hair," and represented in familiar Eastern pictures as "roused by righteous indignation to assail the heretic Arius with a tremendous box on the ear."[2]

With these were the men whose names were already prominently mixed up with the outbreak of the controversy. Arius had been bidden to attend in order to explain and defend his views, and confronting him were Alexander, the aged Bishop of Alexandria, whom he had defied, and Athanasius, the youthful deacon,[3] whose vehement zeal and keen logic were the terror of his enemies. On Athanasius and on Arius the attention of all was fixed. The appearance of Arius, who was then sixty years old, was not calculated to conciliate favour. His face was of a ghastly pallor, his eyes were downcast, his features emaciated, his hair matted, his figure tall and thin, his manner often marked by outbursts of that vehement excitement which made his enemies call him Areimanes, "the madman of Arês." Athanasius, on the other hand, was insignificant in height, but his

[1] Such names sufficiently refute the absurd calumny of Sabinus, Bishop of Heraclea, the Macedonian, that the council consisted of "ἰδιῶται καὶ ἀφελεῖς."—Socr. i. 8.

[2] Stanley, *Eastern Church*, p. 110. He is said to have been deprived of his bishopric for this offence, but miraculously reinstituted.

[3] Athanasius was only present as an attendant upon Alexander, and in some pictures of the council he is represented sitting on the floor.

cheerful vivacity, bright glance, and angelic countenance were the delight of his friends.

And, lastly, more celebrated perhaps at that time than any bishop in the assembly, was its president, and the president of many other synods, Hosius of Cordova, already aged and "world-renowned"; that "Abrahamic old man, holy (ὅσιος) by name and holy in character," who had been a confessor, and whom Constantine trusted more entirely than any bishop of the West.[1]

There were three parties in the council. Some, like Alexander, Hosius, and Marcellus of Ancyra, were not only declared but vehement opponents of the Arians; some, like Eusebius of Nicomedia, Secundus of Ptolemais, and Theonas of Marmarica, together with nearly twenty other bishops, were in more or less open sympathy with the heresiarch. The large body of the council consisted of simple and unlearned men, unskilled in controversy, but with an instinctive consciousness of the true faith, and eager to throw the weight of their authority into the scale of the orthodoxy in which they had been trained. No doubt they were liable to lose their way in the matter of a theological controversy which required some training in philosophy for its comprehension. This is why those who take part in such disputes are compared to armies which encounter each other in the darkness of a night battle about an uncertain cause.[2]

The grandeur of the occasion has magnetised the imagination of Church historians, and there are accounts of scenes and discussions which are full of interest, but

[1] Athan. *Ap. c. Ar.* 44 : καίτοι πάντων ἡμῶν συνελθόντων Ἐπισκόπων καὶ μάλιστα τοῦ εὐγηροτάτου Ὁσίου. *De Fugâ*, 5 : τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ εὐγηροτάτου καὶ ὁμολογήτου ἀληθῶς Ὁσίου . . . οὐ γὰρ ἄσημος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων μάλιστα καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπιφανὴς ὁ γέρων, ποίας γὰρ οὐ καθηγήσατο συνόδου.

[2] Compare Socr. iii. 7 and i. 8.

which rest on no adequate authority. The council had to wait for the opening of its session till Constantine had celebrated at Nicomedia the victory which he had won two years previously over Licinius. But the time was not wasted. The pride of science was confronted from the first by the simplicity of faith. On one occasion, when the theologians in their preliminary discussions were "attempting to fly into the secrets of the deity on the waxen wings of the understanding," a simple layman, maimed, and blinded of an eye in the persecution, rebuked them with the wise warning that "Christ and the Apostles left us not a system of logic, nor a vain deceit, but the naked truth, to be guarded by faith and good works." On another occasion a heathen philosopher, Eulogius, after a speech full of raillery and dialectic, was so much astounded by a simple appeal of the shepherd Spiridion that he was struck dumb, and answering "I believe," suffered himself to be led away to baptism, saying to his followers that though he could oppose words with words, he could not resist the call of God. A third anecdote, recorded at great length by Gelasius of Cyzicus in the fifth century, preserves the answer of one of the bishops to a philosopher named Phaedo, who was arguing against Hosius and others — "Dear friend, we have already told you once for all that in questions of divine mysteries you should never ask the *wherefore* or the *how*."[1]

At last the great day arrived for the formal opening of the council by the Emperor. As the anniversary of his victory over Licinius was on July 3, it was probably on July 5, 325, that he first met the assembled bishops. They were gathered in a great hall of the

[1] Gel. Cyz. ii. 23.

palace, "dilated as it were by God."[1] The inferior members of the council sat on benches which ran along the walls; the bishops sat in chairs in front of the benches. In the centre of the hall was a chair on which lay a copy of the Four Gospels, to symbolise the presence of Christ. At the end was a gilded seat for the Emperor. The assembly sat in silence awaiting his entrance. At last the tramp of armed men was heard, the doors were flung open, and while the imperial guards remained without, some of the great court officials—but only such as were Christians—began to enter.[2] Then a torch signal announced the near approach of the Emperor, and the bishops with the whole assembly rose to their feet. It was then that most of the bishops saw for the first time the gorgeous apparition of the great Christian Emperor. He had arrayed himself for the occasion in the splendid paraphernalia of Oriental royalty, of which he was so fond. The silken robe of imperial purple which flowed over his tall stature and manly limbs was blazing with an embroidery of gold, pearls, and precious stones. Round his long and flowing locks was the diadem—a band of purple silk sparkling with precious gems. On his feet were the purple buskins worn by emperors alone. The simple Fathers were awestruck by the unwonted spectacle of such magnificence. The sight of monarchs in their refulgent state has always produced a deep impression. It was so when the morning sunlight smote on Herod Agrippa's robes of tissued silver in the amphitheatre at Caesarea, and the multitude responded to his speech with the shout, "It is the

[1] ἐν τῷ μεσωτάτῳ τῶν βασιλείων. Socrates calls it "a sacred edifice," i. 8. Theodoret, i. 6, οἶκος μέγιστος ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις.

[2] So Stanley conjectures, p. 122, referring to Euseb. *Paneg.* i. 1.

voice of a god and not of a man." It was so when the present Czar of Russia, on the day of his coronation, stepped out of the cathedral of Moscow in his mantle encrusted with precious stones, and with the royal crown of Russia on his head, and as he glittered in the sunshine the multitude with a spontaneous movement of awe prostrated themselves at his feet. But the jewelled figure of Constantine did not dazzle the Nicene Fathers only by its magnificent array. They saw in him the man who represented the final triumph of the faith of Christ, the man who had conquered by the symbol of the cross, and who had woven the monogram of Christ on the Labarum which had struck more terror into the army of Maxentius than the silver eagles or gilded dragons of the Roman legions. They might be excused if for a moment he seemed to them like a visitant from heaven.[1] Nor had they as yet any misgiving that the verdict of a future age would be that the growth of the Church in wealth and power meant a decline in purity and virtue.[2]

But there is another royalty not of earth — the "meek and humble royalty of Him whose kingdom is not of this world, and who was represented by that gathering of His ministers." Constantine in all the plenitude of his worldly grandeur felt an emotion of awe strike into his heart as he paced up the long hall between their ranks. Remarkable on ordinary occasions for his erect carriage and the almost leonine gleam of his bright eyes, he now walked with downcast glances. A blush visible to all present rose to his cheeks,[3] nobler than that blush of the perjured Sigismund which

[1] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* iii. 10.

[2] Jer. *Vit. Malchi:* "Ecclesia sub principibus divitiis major, virtutibus minor."

[3] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* iii. 10.

was impotent to save John Huss, but which lingered so vividly in the historic memory of Charles V. that it availed to save the life of Martin Luther. The Emperor reached his throne, but, with a mixture of dignity and humility, did not sit down till he had received a sign from the bishops, who then resumed their own seats. If they almost saw in the first Christian Emperor "some heavenly angel of God,"[1] he saw in them an assembly of men clothed with supernatural authority. He had not forgotten the fearful death of his predecessors and rivals; of Diocletian by suicide; of Galerius by a foul disease; of Maximin by poison; of Licinius by execution; of Maxentius, drowned by the weight of his armour in the muddy stream of the Tiber. In those terrible disasters and retributions he saw the hand of God, and in the assembled bishops of Nicaea he saw the earthly wielders of His power.

On either side of him sat Hosius of Cordova and Eusebius of Nicomedia,[2] the chief representatives of the Western and Eastern Churches. When silence was restored, Eusebius of Caesarea rose and addressed him in a brief but elaborate speech, in which he thanked God for his victory over Licinius. By this time the Emperor had recovered his wonted self-possession, and "with pleasant eyes, looking serenity itself upon them all, collecting himself, and in a quiet and gentle voice" he made them a speech in Latin, which was afterwards repeated in Greek by an interpreter. In this speech he implored them to study the interests of peace. The scene would have received an unwonted solemnity if it was on this occasion that he delivered a practical rebuke, which they must have deeply felt. When we

[1] Euseb. l. c. [2] Or Eustathius of Antioch, Theodoret, i. 6.

see the Fathers of Nicaea a little more closely it must be admitted that their ideal collective majesty is much obscured.[1] We see how little they were exempt from the passions and influences of human infirmity. They illustrate the truth of what is affirmed in our Article that councils may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining to God, forasmuch as they be assemblies of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God.[2] We should be far from endorsing the unjust sneer of Peter Martyr that they were "as a set of demoniacs driven by evil furies and malignant passions";[3] but it is a sad fact that the first steps which many of them had taken had been to present to Constantine a number of "libels" or papyrus rolls of charges and complaints against each other. Constantine had received these in displeased silence, and sealed them with his signet ring. On this or on some later occasion, he produced them all from the folds of his mantle, and, ordering a brazier to be brought into the hall, burnt them in presence of all the bishops, declaring with an oath that he had not read one of them. Then in tones of dignified rebuke he asked them how they could expect to be forgiven if they did not forgive, and warned them against the scandal of thus proclaiming each other's faults. It is to be feared that some of the charges were those stigmas of immoral conduct which it was the disgraceful habit of religious opponents to endeavour to fix upon each other; for he added, "As for myself, even were I to see a bishop surprised in adultery,

[1] Jortin, *Remarks on Eccl. Hist.* i. 188, draws up a terrible list of inferior motives by which the members of a council might be unfavourably influenced.

[2] Art. xxi.

[3] *Comm. on* 1 *K. xii.* Quoted by Stanley, *Eastern Church*, p. 102.

I would cover him with my mantle, for fear that the sight of such a scandal should injure the soul of the spectators."

It would take us too long, and is unnecessary to our purpose, to follow either the real or the imaginary history of the Council, which, apart from the twenty canons, is a deluge of forgeries, and of anecdotes more or less dubious.[1] The main interest of it for mankind, and for the life of Athanasius, consists in the Creed which it formulated for the hearty and reverent acceptance of the Christian world. Arius repeatedly appeared to answer for himself, and he found his most formidable opponent in the youthful deacon, whose style, at once vivid and simple, enabled him to express the subtle distinctions of a Greek with the terse lucidity of a Latin. In vain Eusebius of Nicomedia offered to the Fathers an Arianising creed; it was repudiated with marked disapprobation. In vain Eusebius of Caesarea tried to secure acceptance for a creed which he said he had learnt from childhood upwards in the see of Caesarea, but which was not sufficiently specific to exclude Arian interpretations. When the Nicene Fathers insisted that the Word was eternal, and changeless, and of God, the dozen or more Eusebians, with secret nods and signs to each other, intimated that they could accept those expressions, for that *in a sense* they were applied in Scripture even to men.[2] The orthodox bishops therefore endeavoured to find some formula which should bind the Arians to the fullest recognition of the divinity of Christ. In signs and muttered colloquies the Eusebian party indicated to one another that they

[1] Many of these were collected a century later by Gelasius of Cyzicus, and others come from Arabic and Coptic manuscripts.

[2] Athan. *ad Afros.* τονθορύζοντας καὶ διανεύοντας τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς (see *De Synod.* 19, 20, and *passim*).

could accept as applied to Christ the terms God, and Image, and Power, and successfully interpret them into accordance with their own views. At last the orthodox Fathers snatched from the scabbard of Eusebius of Nicomedia the term which was destined to inflict the death-wound on his party.[1] A letter of his was produced in which he had said that he and his adherents could never call Christ "uncreate" (ἀγένητος), because that would be to assert that He was "*of one substance*" (*Homoousios*) with the Father.[2]

Here, then, was the very word which Athanasius and Alexander wanted, a word which not even the "evasive ingenuity" of the Bishop of Nicomedia could misinterpret. And yet it needed all their energy, all their indomitable purpose, all their dialectic skill, to induce the council to accept this test of faith. The word *ousia* had not been used in uniform senses.[3] *Homoousios* was a word of obscure meaning (ἀσαφής). It had been used for individual substances, separate members of one class, and might therefore seem dangerous to monotheism. It might easily be perverted to imply the Sabellian "confusion" of identity of the divine substance which "confounded

[1] Ambr. *De Fide.* iii. 15. "Hoc verbum posuerunt patres, *quod viderunt adversariis esse formidini;* ut tamquam *evaginato* ab *ipsis gladio* nefandum caput haereseos amputarent."

[2] Theodoret, i. 8. It is most unfortunate that in ordinary English the word "substance" has acquired a meaning not only *different* from, but the direct *opposite* of that which philosophically belonged to it. Being the most immaterial of words—a word which it requires an almost impossible effort of imagination even to conceive—it has come to be one of the most material. "*Of one essence*" (οὐσία) and "*co-essential*" would express the truth implied, to most English Christians, far more correctly than "of one substance" and "consubstantial." The variations of our language have mixed up with the latter words the very connotations in which the Arians delighted, and which Athanasius earnestly desired to expel from the terminology which he adopted.

[3] Newman, *Arians*, p. 190; Liddon's *Bampton Lect.* 430; Bright, *Orations of St. Athan.* xv.

the Persons."[1] Paul of Samosata had attached to it a corporeal sense, as of a substance *divided between* the Father and the Son,[2] so as to favour the notion of tritheism, and consequently the Council of Antioch (A.D. 269) had rejected it.[3] Besides all this, it was a non-scriptural term (ἄγραφον). These objections were formidable, and they had the effect of scandalising and alarming many excellent persons.[4] The answers of Athanasius are able and convincing. He argues that the word was absolutely necessary, because no other word could be discovered which would secure the true faith that the Son was in the fullest sense divine and co-equal. Non-scriptural terms were used by all parties alike, by Arians quite as much as others, and might sometimes be necessary to secure the real sense of Scripture. If the word was in itself liable to abuse, it was easy to explain the sense in which it was adopted, and although it might be perverted in one direction by the Sabellians to imply an obliteration of the Three Divine Persons, and in another direction by the Paulicians to suggest a material and tritheistic separation, such perversions were excluded by the context of the creed itself, which professed faith in the Three Persons, and in one God, who is a Spirit. The Council of Antioch had not rejected the true sense of the word in which it had been understood by Origen, Dionysius of Rome, Dionysius of Alex-

[1] As though it were equivalent to *sunousion* or *tautousion*, whereas by its derivation (ὁμοῦ) it implied *difference* as well as *unity*.—Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athan.* p. 202.

[2] Döllinger, *Hist. of the Ch.* i. 177 (E.T.)

[3] Athan. *De Synod.* 45 : εἰρήκασι "μὴ εἶναι τὸν Χριστὸν ὁμοούσιον." Döllinger doubts this fact, for this Council of Antioch was in 269, and its rejection of the word (he says) is first mentioned by the Semi-Arians at Ancyra in 358.

[4] *De Synod.* 33 : τὸ' "ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας" φησὶ καὶ τὸ "ὁμοούσιον," οὐκ ἤρεσεν ἡμῖν· ταῦτα γάρ τινας ἐσκανδάλισε καὶ πολλοὺς ἐθορύβησεν.

andria, and Tertullian,[1] but only the Samosatene misrepresentations of its theological significance.[2] These views prevailed. The council, and through them the Christian world, accepted the word "of one essence" (*Homoousios*, "*Consubstantialis*," "unius substantiae," "ejusdem substantiae") as a test of the orthodox faith respecting the Trinity. When the assembled bishops heard parts of the *Thalia* of Arius read to them they shut their eyes and ears in disgusted astonishment.[3] A creed presented to them by eighteen bishops who were his partisans was indignantly torn in pieces; the same fate befell the letter in which Eusebius of Nicomedia rejected the term *Homoousios;* Arius himself was dismissed from the assembly and disappeared. The Nicene Creed was drawn up mainly in its present form, except that it ended at, "And in the Holy Ghost," and was followed by an anathema—now happily needless—against various current phrases of the Arians. An attempt was made by some to secure a definition of the words *ousia*, "essence," and *hypostasis*, "substantia." In Greek they were used in a sense almost identical; in Latin *substantia*, which etymologically represents *hypostasis,* was constantly used as a translation of *ousia.* Confusion and difficulty might have been prevented in later days if this had been done, for many used quite innocently the expression "Three Hypostases" in the sense of "Three Persons," while to others it sounded entirely heretical. But the council had gone as far in the direction of definition as they wisely could, and they

[1] *Adv. Praxeam.* 4: "*de substantia* Patris."

[2] The arguments of Athanasius are given at full length in *De Synod.* secs. 33-46. Yet what he contended for was the *truth* and not the *word.* He seldom uses it, and would have willingly resigned it if any other could have been formed.—Bp. Kaye, *Council of Nicaea*, p. 57.

[3] Athan. *c. Arian.* i. 295: τὰς ἀκοὰς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐκράτουν.

were content with so using the two words as to prevent them from being forced into any antagonism. They left their creed in general, and the word *Homoousios* in particular, to be, as Luther called it, a *propugnaculum fidei*—a bulwark of the faith.

Constantine heartily accepted the creed. He presumably retained the opinion which he had so forcibly expressed, that the dispute was verbal and superfluous, and he would probably have preferred the creed proposed by Eusebius of Caesarea had there been any chance of its acceptance by the orthodox. But the very fact that the Arians were ready to accept this Caesarean creed decided the orthodox to reject it, since its ambiguity would have left the dispute where it was. The one desire of the Emperor was for peace and unity, and he determined that henceforth the Arians, or, as he called them, Porphyrians, should be put down. The books of Arius were to be burnt. No one was to read them under penalty of death. He was banished, as were also Theonas and Secundus, the only bishops who would not forsake his cause.[1] Hosius subscribed the creed first, then the two presbyters who represented the Bishop of Rome. Eusebius of Caesarea, with certain explanations, found himself ready to accept it,[2] and, if we may judge from the tone of his later writings, became more sincerely orthodox as time went on. Eusebius of Nicomedia, following the advice of Constantia, also subscribed it, as did Theognis and Maris. We cannot believe the story of their

[1] Shortly afterwards they were recalled.

[2] In his ingenious letter to his flock he accepts the word *Homoousios* as meaning that "the Son was like the Father, and *unlike all the other creatures*," and condemns Arius, not for heterodoxy, but for the use of new and unscriptural terms. It is impossible not to cherish a kindly feeling for the Church historian to whom we are so deeply indebted, and Dorner rightly sees in him not a heretic, but "a mirror of the unsolved ecclesiastical problems of his age." See p. 494.

falsification of the actual written creed, but they must have obviously taken the *Homoousios*, "of *one* substance," more or less in the sense of *Homoiousios*, "of *like* substance." They refused to subscribe the anathema, because they thought it unjust to Arius.[1] Eusebius and Theognis were deposed and banished. The case of the Bishop of Nicomedia was complicated by the charge that he had supported the Emperor Licinius.[2] When he had signed the creed Secundus indignantly said to him, "Thou hast subscribed to escape banishment, but within the year thou shalt be as I am."[3]

Such was the origin of "the holy symbol, declared at Nice (A.D. 325), established at Constantinople (A.D. 381), strengthened at Ephesus (A.D. 431), sealed at Chalcedon (A.D. 451)," and which received its last touch in the unauthorised addition of the word *Filioque* at the Provincial Council of Toledo (A.D. 589).[4] And let no one be so shallow as to accept the sneer of Gibbon that those who would accept the *Homoiousian* while they rejected the *Homoousian* faith were the mere victims of a diphthong. The change of a letter may here make the infinite difference between idolatry and true worship. For to the *Homoiousians* Christ was practically only a creature; to the *Homoousians* He was the "Creatour."

[1] Their letter to the bishops may not, however, be genuine.—Socr. i. 14; Sozom. ii. 16. Their subscription to the whole formula is *implied* in Theod. i. 20.

[2] Constantine calls him ὁ τῆς τυραννικῆς ὠμότητος συμμύστης. It shows the supple tact of Eusebius that he could remove so fatal an impression against him in so short a time.

[3] Jerome is the only authority for the assertion that Arius submitted (*c. Lucifer*, 7). According to Rufinus (i. 5) and Socrates (i. 9), he was banished, and Philostorgius (*Suppl. Philostorg.* Euseb. ed. Val. p. 540) says it was to Galatia. De Broglie, ii. 42.

[4] The word *Filioque* was more or less sanctioned at Heathfield (680), Gentilly (767), and Aix la Chapelle (809). It seems to have been informally admitted by Pope Nicholas I. in 857.

Now, "Creature" and "Creatour" (as it used to be spelt) also differ by only a single letter; yet the difference between them spans infinity![1] Even Gibbon, though inclined to sneer at the victims of a diphthong, yet candidly admits that "the sounds and character which approach the nearest to each other often accidentally represent the most opposite ideas."[2]

"Four principal heresies there are," says Hooker, "which have in those things withstood the truth: Arians, by bending themselves against the Deity of Christ; Apollinarians, by maiming and misrepresenting that which belongs to His human nature; Nestorians, by rending Christ asunder and dividing Him into two persons; the followers of Eutyches, by confounding in His person those natures which they should distinguish. Against these there have been four most famous ancient general councils: the Council of Nice to define against Arians; against Apollinarians the Council of Constantinople; the Council of Ephesus against Nestorians; against Eutychians the Chalcedon Council. In four words—ἀληθῶς, τελέως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀσυγχύτως, *truly, perfectly, indivisibly, distinctly*—the first applied to His being God, and the second to His being man, the third to His being of both One, and the fourth to His still continuing in that one Both—we may fully, by way of abridgment, comprise whatsoever antiquity hath at large handled either in declaration of Christian belief or in refutation of the foresaid heresies."[3]

On the subsequent proceedings of the council we need say but little. It settled the Paschal or Quartodeciman controversy, which regulated the time for keeping Easter. It dealt with the schism of Meletius in a spirit

[1] Cazenove, *St. Hilary*, p. 48. [2] Ch. xxi.
[3] *Eccl. Pol.* vol. lv. ch. liv. sec. 10.

so lenient as to excite the displeasure of Athanasius.[1] With the apocryphal canons, interesting as they are in themselves, we are not concerned; but we may allude to one celebrated incident of undoubted authenticity. An endeavour to force the clergy to separate from their wives was only frustrated by the passionate intervention of the hermit-bishop Paphnutius, who exclaimed in loud tones, "Lay not this heavy yoke on the clergy. Marriage is honourable in all and the bed undefiled. By exaggerated strictness you will do the Church more harm than good. All cannot bear such an ascetic rule. The wives themselves will suffer from it. It is enough for a man to be kept from marriage after he has been ordained, according to the ancient custom; but do not separate him from the wife whom once for all he married when he was still a layman." Twice on memorable occasions has this incident been referred to—once by an aged cardinal at the Council of Basle, once by Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, at the trial which preceded his martyrdom—both times in vain.[2] But the total result of the intervention of Paphnutius and its success in the Council of Nicaea has not been in vain. It exercised a deep influence over the opinion of Protestant Churches, and it has had this effect—that throughout the Eastern Church marriage before ordination is not only encouraged but almost enjoined.

But by this time the 25th of July had come round, which was the twentieth anniversary of the Emperor's accession. *Vicennalia* were to be celebrated throughout

[1] *Apol.* 59: οἱ Μελιτιανοὶ ὁπωσδήποτε ἐδέχθησαν οὐ γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον νῦν τὴν αἰτίαν ὀνομάζειν, id. 71. ὅτε Μελίτιος ὑπεδέχθη, ὡς μηπότ' ὤφελον. The latter expression shows how far Athanasius was from believing in the infallibility of councils, even of the Council of Nice.

[2] Milman, *Lat. Christianity*, vi. 120. On the general subject, see Bingham, iv. 5, and Lea *On Clerical Celibacy*.

the Empire, and he himself determined on that day to give a banquet to the bishops. They were delighted with the splendid honour thus shown them, and Eusebius says: "It might have seemed the likeness of the kingdom of Christ—the fancy of a dream rather than a waking reality." It was perhaps on this occasion that, looking round on the assembled bishops, Constantine exclaimed, "And I too am a bishop. You are bishops for matters within the Church, and God has made me a bishop for the things without." It was long remembered how the Emperor embraced Paphnutius, and kissed his eyeless socket. Among others with whom he conversed was the Novatian schismatic Acesius. A boy named Auxano was his attendant; and long afterwards, when he had become an old man, he narrated to the historian Socrates how the Emperor had laughingly told Acesius that "he had better plant a ladder and climb up to heaven by himself."[1] Nothing could have been happier than the conclusion of the banquet. The Emperor made the bishops a farewell speech, full of good sense and kindly feeling. He bade them avoid party strifes, envy, exclusiveness, and intolerance, and love peace and seek for truth with unbiassed minds. Then he loaded them with presents, and ordered large sums of money to be devoted to some of their charitable endowments. They went home, as they had come, at the public expense.

A legend, which may be based on fact, says that on the last Sunday before they took their departure Constantine invited them to visit the new city which he meant to found at Byzantium, and Metrophanes, its aged bishop. During the visit Metrophanes prophesied that Alexander of Byzantium, and after him Paul, then a boy, should be his successors, and said to Alexander of

[1] Socr. i. 10.

Alexandria, pointing to Athanasius, "You too, my brother, shall have a good successor. Behold the noble champion of Christ! Many conflicts will he sustain in company not only with my successor Alexander, but even with my next successor Paul." Whether the tale be true or not, it indicates sufficiently that Athanasius, who had come to Nicaea as a young deacon with a local reputation, returned home a world-famous man.

NOTE TO P. 489.

It may serve to make us think more leniently of Eusebius of Caesarea if we remember that even the staunchest defenders of the Nicene faith admitted that there were real objections to the word ὁμοούσιον (see Athan. *De Synod.* secs. 39-54), although they were outweighed by the fact that it was the only known bulwark (ἐπιτείχισμα) of the faith. Hilary (*De Synod.* sec. 67) confesses "*Multi* ex nobis ita unam substantiam Patris et Filii praedicant ut videri possint non magis id pie quam impie praedicare: habet enim hoc verbum in se et fidei conscientiam et fraudem paratam." See p. 487.

IX

Continued

ATHANASIUS AT ALEXANDRIA

(A.D. 326-336)

"We know our place and our portion; to give a witness and to be condemned; to be ill-used and to succeed. Such is the law which God has annexed to the promulgation of the truth; its preachers suffer, but its course prevails."—NEWMAN.

SECTION IV

FIVE months after the Council of Nice, in the year 326,[1] Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, lay on his deathbed.[2] Athanasius was absent on some Church business, but the dying prelate repeatedly called him by his name. Another Athanasius was present and stepped forward, but not noticing him Alexander still called for "Athanasius," and at last exclaimed, "You think you have escaped, but you will not escape."

[1] In the index to the Festal Letters the date is June 8, 328; but as this index is not free from errors and corruptions, and as he himself says, after speaking of the council, οὔπω γὰρ πέντε μῆνες παρῆλθον καὶ ὁ μὲν μακαρίτης Ἀλέξανδρος τετελεύτηκεν, κ.τ.λ., I think it best to adhere to the old date without discussing an intricate and uncertain question.

[2] During these five months he had written the "Festal Letter," in which, by the decision of the Council of Nice, it was the duty of the Alexandrian prelate, with the aid of the science which Alexandria could command, to announce to his own people and to the Bishop of Rome the day on which Easter would fall.

The patriarch died, and Athanasius on his return to Alexandria was received with transports of joy. The Egyptian bishops were assembled to elect a successor to the vacant see, and the people thronged around them with cries of "Give us Athanasius, the pious, the devout, the true Christian, the ascetic. He will be a bishop indeed." "In a time of public danger," says Gibbon, "the dull claims of age and rank are sometimes superseded." The majority of the bishops voted for him, and, on June 8, 326, he was formally elected. The Meletians and Eusebians in vain trumped up the slander that he had been hastily and secretly consecrated by six or seven bishops, who formed a plot for the purpose. The story of the Arian Philostorgius, that he seized a church by night and compelled two bishops to consecrate him there, is worthy of a man who, in lieu of his name "Lover of affection," has earned the names of Philopseudes and Kakostorgius—"Lover of lies" and "Hater of natural affection."[1] His peaceful election "in an apostolic and spiritual manner," as Gregory says, "without force and bloodshed, was attested by the public declaration of his suffragans a few years later."[2]

For forty-six years, amid manifold trials and varied fortunes, Athanasius remained "Pope" of Alexandria,[3]

[1] It is strange that so public a fact could be so notoriously misrepresented, but it seems clear that everything did not take place quite so smoothly as his friends asserted. The notion that the Bishops of Alexandria were consecrated only by presbyters seems to be a mistake, and Liberatus is our only authority for the story that the bishop kept watch by the corpse of his predecessor, put his dead hand upon his head, and took from his shoulders the pall of St. Mark.

[2] See *Apol. c. Ar.* 5, where this letter is given; but they ignore too entirely the existence of at least *one* strong minority of opponents.

[3] The name Pope, "Πάπα," was at this time perhaps peculiar to the Bishops of Alexandria. It is said to be a corruption of *ab-aba*, *pater fratrum*. It was not till the time of Siricius (A.D. 385) that it began to be given to the Bishops of Rome. The title "Metropolitan" is used in the

the occupant of the chair of St. Mark, "the head of the Alexandrian Church," and therefore, according to Gregory of Nazianzus, "the head of the world." As a patriarch strong in the popular affection, he almost held the position of a sovereign prince. By nationality he was, perhaps, himself a Copt. At any rate he spoke Coptic, in which language alone could he have conversed with some of the hermits, who knew Greek very imperfectly. The Greek population of Alexandria was largely Pagan, and was not so deeply attached to him, but his own people loved him with a passionate devotion. However rhetorical may be the magnificent eulogies pronounced upon him by Gregory of Nazianzus, he draws a true picture of a man whose character exhibits a rare constellation of virtues. Vigorous yet full of tact and common-sense, strong yet sympathetic, dignified yet gifted with geniality and humour, attractive as the magnet yet firm as the diamond, Athanasius wielded without arrogance the power of his high office, showing himself gentle to the weak, "hospitable to strangers, kindly to suppliants, accessible to all, slow to anger, pleasant in conversation, still more pleasant in temper, effective alike in discourse and in action, assiduous in devotions, helpful to Christians of every class and age, a theologian with the speculative, a comfort to the afflicted, a staff to the aged, a guide of the young, a physician to the sick, a promoter of Christian marriage and a purifier of married life,—in short, such a prelate as Paul described by anticipation, when in writing to Timothy he showed what a bishop ought to be."[1]

Three events caused him special happiness during

canons of Nice. The word Archbishop is said to occur first in Athanasius. The title Patriarch is first found vaguely used in the writings of Basil and the Gregories.

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxi. 9, 10.

the comparatively peaceful years of his early episcopate.

One of these was his visit to the Thebais in 327, during the course of his ordinary pastoral visitation. He travelled as far as Syene, and when he reached Tabenne he was met by a vast multitude of monks of the desert, who received him with a burst of psalmody. They were the ever-growing community founded by the converted Pagan soldier Pachomius, who (A.D. 340) did a work even greater than was done by another converted soldier, Ignatius Loyola, twelve centuries later (1534). These monks, clad in sleeveless tunics, sheepskin cloaks, and woollen cowls, had all accepted the rule of Pachomius, and devoted their lives to silence, to labour, and to worship. All the stately monasteries of which we see the buildings and the ruins throughout the length and breadth of Europe and in many parts of Asia, may be regarded as the daughters of those humble communities on the banks of the Nile. Athanasius, himself an ascetic, saw them with a feeling akin to exultation; but for Pachomius he looked in vain. The lowly abbot, fearing that the archbishop would ordain him priest over the whole body of monks, had hid himself among the undistinguished crowd. Standing in the throng of his companions he saw the face of his bishop, and exclaimed with prophetic voice that "He was a man of God and would have much to endure in the cause of true religion."

A second happy incident was the visit of a stranger from Abyssinia, whose name was Frumentius. He had a curious tale to tell. A Tyrian philosopher named Meropius, anxious to visit India, had taken with him two little boys, who were his wards and kinsmen. Of these the elder one was Frumentius, the younger Ædesius. On their return they had touched at a port of

Abyssinia on the Red Sea to obtain water, and there the barbarians, to avenge some grudge against former voyagers, had massacred Meropius and the whole crew. They found the two children seated quietly under a tree preparing their lessons, and, moved by compassion for their tender age, had taken them to their king. The king, whose name was Abreha, and who lived at Axum, made Ædesius his cup-bearer and Frumentius his secretary, and when he died restored them their liberty.[1] The queen, however, begged them to remain in the country as tutors and advisers of her young sons. In this position they practically held the administration of Abyssinia, and used their power to introduce Christian ideas and provide churches for Christian residents. The work grew in their hands, but when the young king Atzbeha came of age they wished to return to their native home. Ædesius hastened to Tyre to visit his relatives and friends, but Frumentius went to Alexandria to entreat that a bishop might be appointed to take charge of the Abyssinian Christians. Athanasius called together a synod of bishops, and significantly pointed their attention to Frumentius himself. He was consecrated, and became the founder of Christianity for the people among whom a strange destiny had cast his early years. Centuries afterwards he was still celebrated in Ethiopian songs under the name of "Abba Salama, the gate of pity and mercy, who caused the glory of Christ's light to dawn in Ethiopia, where before there had been clouds and darkness." This event probably occurred in 330.[2]

[1] See Ludolf, *Hist. Eth.* iii. 2. The brothers are called Fremonatos and Sydvacus in Ethiopian records.

[2] The date, however, is highly uncertain. Rufinus (i. 9) heard the story from the lips of Ædesius himself, who became a presbyter at Tyre.

If we can attach credence to a very uncertain legend, another gleam of happiness fell on years which were full of trouble and anxiety. Antony, the aged hermit of the desert, visited Alexandria for the express purpose of supporting Athanasius and repudiating all sympathy with the Arian cause. The people flocked in crowds to see this strange figure of one who had lived so far from the ways of men, and listened with beating hearts to his rude, fiery, uncultured eloquence. When he returned to his solitudes, Athanasius himself is said to have accompanied him to the gates of Alexandria, where his last act was to heal a youth possessed by an evil spirit. To Antony, however, Athanasius in his genuine and uninterpolated writings never makes a single allusion.

Meanwhile the clouds of hatred and persecution had been gathering densely over the head of the archbishop. Few indeed were the brightening elements in a career which would have been intolerable even unto death to a spirit less radiant and faithful than his. His enemies, with the worldly and astute Eusebius of Nicomedia at their head, pursued him with a sleepless malignity. They strained every effort to undermine the Nicene faith and its chief supporters. On Athanasius himself they poured forth a flood of infamous calumnies with the express object of deposing and ruining him. "The Arians," says Hooker, "never suffered him to enjoy the comfort of a peaceable day." For this object they formed an unholy alliance with the Meletian schismatics, now under a chief bishop whose name was John Arcaph, a man of unscrupulous character. The Meletians were to invent and disseminate the calumnies, the Eusebians were to bring them under the notice of the Emperor.

If it was told him in 378 Ædesius must have been an old man, but we cannot surely reject so distinct a testimony.

And here we cannot but pause to deplore once again the spirit of slanderous violence which, in age after age, has been the disgrace of the Church of Christ. Prevalent in every epoch, it shows how the fuglemen of parties are apt to forget the most elementary graces of true holiness, the first and most universal commandment of Christian love. They conceal the bitterness of personal malevolence under the conceit of supposed infallibility. But zeal for God, when noble, is pure. It is not a mere fury of egotism disguising itself under the sanction of misinterpreted texts. It does not condescend to unscrupulous wire-pulling and subterranean cabals. When Eustathius of Antioch was driven from his see, Socrates remarks that it was a matter of ordinary occurrence for the bishops "to load with opprobrious epithets and pronounce 'impious' those whom they deposed, without assigning any warrant for doing so." Such has been the universal method of controversy, which leads men to act as though Christ could be served by malignant falsehood and Christianity advanced by unblushing crime!

The first object of the Eusebians was to strengthen their cause at court, and to isolate the archbishop by the overthrow of the most powerful supporters of the *Homoousion*. Three years after the Council of Nice, in 328, they succeeded, through the instrumentality of Constantia, in procuring the recall of Arius from exile, which was followed by the recall of Eusebius and Theognis. Then by odious intrigues they brought about the banishment of Eustathius of Antioch, and in order to carry their point did not even stop short at subornation of perjury. They carried the election of Eulalius in his place, and on his death offered the see to Eusebius of Caesarea, who wisely declined it. But as an Arian named Euphronius was then elected, this proved to be the beginning of the

unhappy schism of Antioch, which troubled the Church for so many years. When they had got possession of other important sees by similar methods, they ventured to secure from Constantine a demand that Arius should be re-admitted into the communion of the Alexandrian Church. To this demand it was of course impossible for Athanasius to accede, and the refusal kindled the Emperor into a rage which made him ready to listen to any lies. After attacking Athanasius on the ground of irregular election and tyrannical conduct, the Eusebians brought against him three definite charges. They said (1) that he had traversed Egypt to provide linen *sticharia* (some sort of alb) for the Alexandrian clergy; (2) that he had sent off gold to a conspirator named Philumenus; (3) that he had despatched his presbyter Macarius to attack another presbyter named Ischyras, and had so caused a holy chalice to be broken. Athanasius came to Nicomedia to rebut these charges, and was there taken seriously ill. He was able, however, to meet the Emperor in a suburb of Nicomedia, and he so absolutely disposed of the ridiculous accusations against him that Constantine for a time got over his jealous wrath, and wrote a letter in which he commended Athanasius and severely condemned the ambition and turbulence of his Meletian calumniators.

The apparent vacillations of Constantine are not difficult to understand. In matters of theology he was as ignorant as his flatterers led him to fancy that he was profound. He began with irritated indifference, and ended in autocratic dogmatism. At first he blamed Arius and Alexander as though they were equally in the wrong. He then treated the points in dispute as questions of words and names which ought never to have been mooted. But his vanity had been exalted and his

imagination magnetised by the Council of Nice, in which he had come to regard himself as a sort of bishop of bishops. After this, in the intense desire to maintain unity, which was probably the sincerest of his motives, he became an ardent champion of the Nicene orthodoxy. When, however, Eusebius had managed not only to procure his own recall from exile, but also to insinuate himself with courtier-like suppleness into the Emperor's confidence, he succeeded in removing his prejudices against Arius and in embellishing Arianism itself in colours so seductive as to induce the Emperor to look upon it as the only sensible form of right belief. With such a man as Eusebius at the ear of such a man as Constantine, there was little chance that Athanasius would be left in peace.

The two first charges against Athanasius died of their own absurdity, but the third continued to be a source of pain and trouble for many years.

The story was this. In the Mareotis was a hamlet named "the Peace of the Secontaruri," where lived a man named Ischyras, who is said to have been hated for his bad character. He had been spuriously ordained by the schismatic presbyter Colluthus, and had been ordered by Hosius to return to the ranks of the laity. In spite of this he continued to usurp the functions of a presbyter, and, as there was no church in the village, he officiated at the house of an orphan, where he only succeeded in inducing seven persons to attend his ministry. Hearing of these irregularities, Athanasius in the course of his visitation (about A.D. 329) sent his presbyter Macarius to summon Ischyras, and to induce his father to prevent the misconduct of his son. Ischyras at the moment was ill in bed. The father of Ischyras forbade his son to continue his unauthorised proceedings,

and the young man went over to the Meletians. They at once seized their opportunity. They compelled Ischyras by threats, and even by blows,[1] to support a story that Macarius—or, as some of them preferred to say, Athanasius himself—had rushed into the church, broken the chalice, overthrown the holy table, burnt the books, and destroyed the building! The answer of Athanasius to this calumny was complete. He showed that the house was not a church; that Ischyras was not a presbyter; that no communion had been or could have been celebrated on the day mentioned;[2] that the man himself had been ill in bed; and that there was not the shadow of a ground for the entire fiction. Nor was this all. Unable to bear the indignation of his friends and the contempt of all good men, Ischyras himself came to Athanasius and confessed with tears that he had been compelled to his criminal false-witness by the personal violence of three Meletian bishops. "God is witness," he stated in writing, "that I know nothing of your having done any of the things they state. No cup was broken, no holy table overturned. They goaded me by force into these assertions."[3] This recantation was witnessed by the signatures of thirteen of the clergy of Alexandria and Mareotis.

It was, however, impossible to re-admit into immediate communion a man who was doubly a schismatic, who stood self-condemned for heinous perjuries, and who had persisted in his calumny even after Constantine had driven away in disgrace the accusers of

[1] *Apol. c. Arian.* sec. 64: *βίας μοι γενομένης καὶ πληγῶν ἐπιτεθεισῶν* (recantation of Ischyras).

[2] *Apol.* sec. 11. The Eucharist in Egypt was only celebrated on Saturdays, Sundays, and festivals.

[3] Letter of Ischyras to Athanasius, *Apol. c. Arian.* sec. 64; and letter of Mareotic clergy to Council of Tyre, id. sec. 74.

Athanasius. The Meletians took advantage of this interval, and induced the wretched slanderer in due time to recant his recantation.

Yet darker, if yet more absurd, was a fourth charge, persistently urged for years against the great archbishop by his enemies. It was a charge of nothing less than murder and magic, and it shows the liability of that age to fall into paroxysms of terrifying superstition.

If there was one charge more than another which it was impossible to disprove and which yet created the intensest prejudice against any one who was its victim, it was the charge of magic. The slightest suspicion of sorcery, now as in the Middle Ages, wrought up the ignorance and credulity of men's minds into a frenzy of horror and alarm.[1] Of this the Meletians were aware, and they went about horrifying all whom they met by showing them a wooden box in which was the black and withered hand of a dead man. "This," they said, "is the hand of Arsenius, Bishop of Hypsele. It is well known that he has disappeared. He has been poisoned by Athanasius, and his remains have been used for magical incantations." Grotesque as the charge appears to us, it was supported by John Arcaph and his Meletian suffragans, and it seemed so formidable even to the startled mind of Constantine, that in spite

[1] See Gibbon, iii. 243; Döllinger, *Gentile and Jew*, ii. 214 (E.T.), and the authorities there quoted. See too the story of the wild panic on the subject in the reign of Valens, Ammian. Marcell. xxviii. 1; xxix. 2. The persistent charge that he was a magician is connected by some with his rapid appearances and apparent ubiquity; by others with the story that being tauntingly asked by some Pagans in the streets what a raven was saying, he answered "*Cras*, for to-morrow your festivals will be prohibited," which was the case. Perhaps on this slight foundation of a mere jest is founded the charge of Ammianus (xv. 7) that Athanasius was skilled in augury and *fatidicae sortes*.

of the baselessness of the previous charges, he summoned Athanasius to appear at Antioch before his half-brother the Censor Dalmatius, and there to answer these accusations. At first the archbishop was inclined to treat the matter as too contemptible for notice; but finding that it was regarded as serious, he sent a deacon to the Thebais to make inquiries.

It was true that Arsenius had disappeared. He had been bribed by John Arcaph to hide himself in the monastery of Ptemencyrcis, and the deacon discovered this fact from some monks. They, however, sent warning to Pinnes, the Abbot of Ptemencyrcis, and he sent Arsenius down the Nile with a monk named Helias. The deacon made his way to Ptemencyrcis, arrested Pinnes and Helias, and brought them before the duke of the district. There they confessed that Arsenius was alive, and had been sent to Tyre; and a letter from Pinnes to Arcaph was intercepted, in which he told the Meletian that it would be useless to persist in the old story. The deacon — evidently a man of admirable promptitude — hastened with all speed to Tyre, and was informed by the servants of a consular that they had overheard a man in a tavern saying that Arsenius was concealed in a certain house. There he was found, and at first denied his own identity, but was at last "convicted of being himself" before the tribunal of Paul, Bishop of Tyre. Arsenius thereupon wrote a humble and deeply penitent letter to Athanasius, "his blessed pope," promising to abandon his schism and to return to the Church. This promise he faithfully kept. The archbishop wrote to inform the Emperor that Arsenius had been discovered, and Constantine, once more disabused of the prejudices which were daily buzzed in his ears, stopped further proceedings. He

wrote two letters, one dismissing the Eusebian accusers, and the other to Athanasius himself, in which he threatened the Meletians with his extremest displeasure. Arcaph thereupon wrote both to the Emperor and to Athanasius to express regret, and asked to be admitted into communion.[1]

This was in the year 333: but, strange to say, the matter was not even now set at rest, nor did Athanasius long enjoy the happy peace which breathes through the Festal Letter, in which he announced the Easter day of this year. Eusebius of Nicomedia persuaded the Emperor that the charges which had been so completely shattered to pieces ought to be examined before an ecclesiastical council at Caesarea under the auspices of the historian Eusebius. The council met, but for thirty months Athanasius refused to take the least notice of its citations.

In 335 another council was summoned at Tyre, before the dedication of the splendid Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem. The archbishop received a positive command from the Emperor to appear before this council. He went there accompanied by forty-eight of his suffragans, and at once saw that it was, as Paphnutius called it, "a council of malignants." The president was Flacillus, the Arian usurper of the see of Antioch, and among the judges were six Eusebian bishops, notoriously hostile to the champion of the Nicene faith. The primate and his Egyptian suffragans were insolently introduced, not by deacons, but by a registrar. Macarius, innocent as he was by the con-

[1] The reply of Constantine to the letter of this worthless person is strangely respectful. He invites him to Nicomedia, and offers him the use of the public vehicles (*Apol. c. Arian*, sec. 70). After the death of his mother Helena, Constantine fell more under the influence of his sister Constantia, the widow of Licinius, who was strongly inclined in favour of Arius

fession of Ischyras himself, was dragged in by soldiers a fettered prisoner. Athanasius handed in legal exceptions to the constitution of the council, but they were not received, and he was kept standing as though he were a criminal. The sight of so many undeserved indignities was too much for the feelings of the old confessor, Potamon. Seeing Eusebius of Caesarea sitting among the judges, he broke out with the indignant exclamation, "Do *you* sit there and pretend to be a judge of the innocent Athanasius? Intolerable! You and I were once in prison together. I lost an eye. How came you to get off scatheless?" "If you are so domineering here," answered Eusebius, "so far from your own district, it is quite natural that your countrymen should accuse you of insolent arrogance."

The Bishop of Nicomedia stood at the head of the theological conservatism of the old "Monarchians," and served them by his influence at court. He wished in reality to impugn the Nicene faith, but he did not venture to do this openly. His aim was to ruin its most prominent defender. If once Athanasius could be set aside, he did not despair of an Arian reaction. New charges were brought against him of having overthrown the episcopal chair of Callinicus, a bishop who refused to abandon the story about the broken chalice; of exciting the repugnance of the laity of Alexandria; and of various acts of irregularity and cruelty. Eustathius had been deposed at Antioch on the lying charge of a suborned woman, and one story is that the same attempt was made against the honour of Athanasius. It was instantly refuted by the presence of mind of the presbyter Timotheus, who, getting up, asked the woman "if she really accused him of this crime?" "Certainly,"

said the woman, thus showing to the whole council that she did not even know Athanasius by sight.[1] But the old stories were persisted in. The wooden box and the dead hand again caused a cry of real or simulated horror, and the story of the discovery of Arsenius was declared to be an imposture. "Do any of you know Arsenius by sight?" asked the archbishop. "We did, when he was alive," said some of them. He led forward the muffled figure of a man, who stood there with head bent down. Athanasius withdrew the mantle from his face, and said, "Raise your head." "Is this Arsenius?" he asked. The bishops who knew him exclaimed, "It is!" Lifting the cloak, he bade him put forth first one hand, then, after a pause, the other. "You see," he said, with the humour which often lightened forth even amid his worst troubles, "he has two hands. Where is the third which I cut off? God has created men with two hands only."[2] Arcaph rushed out, declaring that this was another case of magical illusion; but by this time Count Dionysius, who had been appointed by the Emperor to watch the proceedings, saw the shamefully unscrupulous character of the assembly. He consented, however, to a commission of enquiry into the affair of Ischyras, and this commission, in spite of the protest of the Egyptian bishops, was composed of six notorious Eusebians. Among these were Valens and Ursacius, who, after degradation from the priesthood, had been appointed to bishoprics in Pan-

[1] Rufin. i. 17; Sozom. ii. 25; Theodoret, i. 30. The latter historians only copy the former. Philostorgius relates the story in a different way. There is no allusion to it in the acts of the council, and we may hope that the story is false, for Socrates omits, and Athanasius makes no allusion to it.

[2] Neither the slight variations in the mode of telling this story, nor the silence of Athanasius, are sufficient to render it improbable. It is told by Rufinus, Sozomen, Theodoret, and (independently) by Socrates.

nonia solely because they were adherents of Arius.[1] The proceedings of this commission were the most flagrant travesty of justice. They took Ischyras with them to share lodging, board, and wine-cup, and made him their friend. They intimidated adverse witnesses, received impossible testimony, encouraged the Pagan rabble to insult the Catholics, disregarded all counter-protests, and presented an adverse report. Their proceedings had been invalid and infamous from beginning to end, but Athanasius was condemned, and Ischyras, who was not even a presbyter, was made a bishop and had a church built for him.[2] Then the bishops adjourned to Jerusalem, where they held another synod and dedicated the church. Shortly afterwards, at the request of the Emperor, Arius was re-admitted into Church communion, and an attempt was made to involve Marcellus of Ancyra in a charge of heresy.[3]

These proceedings were cut short by an unexpected event. Athanasius, seeing the hopeless malice of his enemies, sailed away to Constantinople with the bold design of seeing "whether the throne was accessible to the voice of truth."[4] As the Emperor was riding into his new capital, his bridle was suddenly seized by a man

[1] They belonged to the worldly court party; οὗτοι γὰρ ἀεὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἐπικρατοῦντας ἐπέκλινον.—Socr. ii. 37.

[2] It is to be observed that Eusebius of Caesarea—whose silence is sometimes more remarkable than his statements—inserts Constantine's address to the Council of Tyre, and the events before and after it (*H. E.* ii. 41, 42), but does not mention Athanasius or the charges against him. Perhaps he felt a touch of shame. Ischyras appeared as "Bishop of Marcotis" at Sardica (343) and Philippopolis. Soz. iii. 12; Hilar. *Frag.* iii. (called "Quirius").

[3] This was pursued later on in a synod at Constantinople, in which Eusebius of Caesarea argued against the books of Marcellus, and procured his deposition. Marcellus was, however, acquitted by the Councils of Rome and Sardica, and Pope Julius declared him to be orthodox. See *Apol. c. Arian.* 32.

[4] Gibbon, iii. 73.

of short stature. It was the Archbishop of Alexandria. At first Constantine did not recognise him, but on being told who he was, refused to hear him.[1] "Then," said Athanasius, "God will be the judge between me and you, since you have joined the ranks of my calumniators." As Constantine persisted in his refusal to listen, he called out, "I want this only. Either convoke a lawful council, or summon the members of the Council of Tyre to meet me in your presence." To this the Emperor yielded, and in a burst of ill-temper wrote a letter to the Eusebians, who were then holding high festival at Jerusalem, rebuking their tumultuous proceedings, and summoning them before him.[2] The alarmed bishops scattered in all directions, but five were chosen to obey the Emperor's summons. These were the two Eusebii, Theognis, Patrophilus, Ursacius, and Valens. When they were confronted with Athanasius they said not a word of the six or seven other calumnies which had been already torn to shreds — not a word about Ischyras and the broken chalice, not a word about Arsenius and the dead hand—but suddenly accused the archbishop of having threatened to stop the Alexandrian corn ships which supplied the bread of Constantinople! They could have devised no charge, not even that of magic, more calculated to rouse the Emperor into fury, and make him look on Athanasius as a dangerous rival. A few years earlier the mere suspicion of similar interference with the food supply of the capital cost the sophist Sopater his life. Athanasius, though taken completely by surprise, at once answered, "I never said anything of the kind; the charge is

[1] *καὶ μικροῦ δεῖν ἀπελαύνεσθαι αὐτὸν ἐκέλευον*, says the Emperor.

[2] Constantine describes the interview with Athanasius in this letter. —*Apol. c. Ar.* sec. 87.

absurd; I am a private person, and poor. How could I do anything so serious?"[1] "I swear," answered the Bishop of Nicomedia, "that you are wealthy, and powerful, and quite adequate for such an attempt." The charge succeeded. Constantine knew that Athanasius had been accused of having murdered a man who was alive, and had already declared in his letter that the Meletians were cursed, lawless, and clumsy fools.[2] Yet now, perhaps in despair of discovering any truth whatever among these contending bishops, and in disgust at the whole business, he banished Athanasius to Trèves, the capital of Gaul. The triumph of the Eusebians was, however, shortlived, for Constantine curtly refused their request that another bishop should be elected in his stead.[3]

[1] *Apol. c. Arian.* 9 : πῶς γὰρ ἂν ἰδιώτης ἄνθρωπος καὶ πενὴς τηλικαῦτα δύναιτο ;

[2] *Apol. c. Arian.* 9, 68 : ἀθεμίτους, ἀρᾶς ἀξίους, σκαιοτάτους.

[3] Constantine II. afterwards declared that his father's object had been to rescue him from his enemies, intending to restore him.—*Apol.* secs. 9, 87.

IX

Continued

FROM THE FIRST EXILE OF ATHANASIUS TO HIS SECOND RETURN

(A.D. 336-346)

"They also serve who only stand and wait."—Milton.

SECTION V

It was in February 336 that Athanasius arrived at his place of banishment, and happily his exile was not severe. To be so far away from Alexandria, and his own beloved flock, and all whom he had known and loved since childhood, could not fail to be a heavy trial; but the city of Trèves was a noble and beautiful one, he was accompanied by several friends, and he received an honourable welcome from the younger Constantine and from Maximin, the orthodox bishop. Nor was he forbidden to correspond with his people, though he ran the risk of having his letters seized and used against him. At Trèves he stayed for two years and a half—happy, as he always was, for he never estimated orthodoxy by popular approval, but had "planted his foot beyond the waves of time."

The news which from time to time was brought to

him must have been of thrilling interest. He heard that men for whom Constantine had a profound veneration had interceded for him in vain; that the Emperor, kept in a state of perpetual irritation by the intrigues of Eusebius, and unable to believe the motives which prompted an opposition so virulent, had written to the clergy and virgins of Alexandria to upbraid them for petulant affections; that Arius had been permitted to return to Alexandria but had been the cause of so many tumults as to lead to his recall. Then his heart must have sunk to hear that at last Eusebius had succeeded in persuading his bewildered sovereign that Arius was, after all, innocent, and that the only method of securing religious unity was to command the public reconciliation of the heretic with the Church.[1]

Arius appeared before the Emperor, and handed to him a profession of faith which, while it absolutely refused to admit the word "consubstantial," sounded reasonably orthodox to his untrained mind. In his perplexity he exclaimed, "If your faith is sound you have sworn innocently to its soundness, but if it is impious God will punish your perjury!" It is easy to assert that Arius was simply cajoling the Emperor with words. It may have been so, but in cases where we know so little of the details it seems fairer and more charitable to leave his motives to the judgment of God. Epiphanius, as we have seen, did not hesitate to compare Arius at the very beginning of his career to a subtle and venomous snake;[2] but Epiphanius is the worst possible guide for those who hold that the duty of love is not obliterated even by differences of opinion. "I do not

[1] The letter of Constantine to Arius (Socr. i. 25) is addressed to "your inflexibility" (στερρότητί σου), and ends, "may God protect you, beloved!"

[2] Epiphan. *Haer.* lxix. 5, ἐσχηματισμένος ὡς δόλιος ὄφις.

believe," says Bishop Reinkens, "that Arius was from the first a deliberate deceiver. All that we know of him can be psychologically explained without any recourse to the assumption of hypocrisy."[1] We reject the stupid story of Socrates that when he said, "I accept the creed," he meant, not the Nicene Creed, but another which he carried secretly under his arm; but if in *any* degree he was guilty of falsehood, retribution in this instance followed him with winged feet and smote him with an iron hand.

Alexander, the Primate of Constantinople, was a man of gentle disposition, who felt himself neither strong nor able enough to resist the command of his Emperor that on the following day he must receive Arius to communion in the church named Irene. In his anguish he prostrated himself in the sacrarium, and prayed with weeping eyes and uplifted hands, "If Arius comes tomorrow to the church, take me away, and let me not perish with the guilty. But if Thou pitiest Thy Church, as Thou dost pity it, take Arius away (*αἶρε Ἄρειον*), lest when he enters heresy enter with him."[2] The fateful morning dawned.[3] Arius, elated beyond his wont, and uttering many idle remarks,[4] was on his way to the church, surrounded by Eusebians and by a curious and agitated multitude, when he was seized with sudden gastric pain, and retired to a place behind the forum. His attendants waited for him an unwonted time. Going at last to summon him, they were horrified by a ghastly spectacle. The old man—he was past eighty

[1] Reinkens, *Hilarius*, p. 77.

[2] The prayer, as overheard by the presbyter Macarius, is given by Athanasius in his letter to Serapion, sec. 3. Compare Socr. i. 37.

[3] Or perhaps the event took place that same evening, Socr. i. 38. Epiphanius (*Haer.* lxviii. 5) vaguely says, *κατὰ τὰς νύκτας*. The details vary.

[4] Athan. *Ep. ad Sarap.* 3.

years of age—had burst asunder in the midst, and lay weltering in his blood, a horrid spectacle.[1] "Such," says Bishop Wordsworth, "are the facts of history. The reader will make his own comments upon them."[2]

The death of Arius was universally compared to that of Judas. It struck profound discouragement into the ranks of his supporters, and was accepted by the orthodox as a judgment on his cause.[3] It is hardly possible to resist a terrible suspicion of poison. If Athanasius found no difficulty in believing the story that Paul, the orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, had been secretly strangled in a dark cell at Cucusus in 352, there must have been men in the religious world who were quite capable of thinking that in getting rid of Arius they were doing God service. Sozomen says that if a Christian traitor shot the arrow in that night-skirmish which ended the career and the hopes of Julian, he could hardly be blamed for doing the "noble deed for God and his religion":—which is said to be the earliest justification by Christians of tyrannicide *ad majorem Dei gloriam*.[4]

[1] πολλὰ φλυαρῶν.

[2] Comments are made by Athanasius, Epiphanius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose, and the Greek ecclesiastical historians; see too Gibbon, ch. xxi.; Newman, *on Eccl. Miracles*, p. clxx.

[3] Athanasius is perhaps the safest witness of what actually occurred, though even he, being at a distance, might partly have been deceived by false rumours. He says (*Ep. ad Ep. Eg.* sec. 19), "The sun had not yet set" (apparently, however, on the day of Alexander's prayer), "when necessity dragging Arius to a certain place, he there fell down, and was at once deprived of both things—communion and life. And the blessed Constantine, the moment he heard it, wondered, *seeing him convicted as a perjurer*." In the *Letter to Serapion* he says (sec. 3), after mentioning the prayer of Bishop Alexander, "And a thing took place marvellous and strange. While the Eusebians were threatening, the bishop prayed; but Arius was confident in the Eusebians, and, with many futile speeches, entered into a latrine to relieve himself, and suddenly, as it is written, 'falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst' and instantly expired." In the *History of the Arians* (sec. 48) he merely says ἐπιορκήσας Ἄρειος καὶ ῥαγείς.

[4] Schaff, *Nicene Christianity*, i. 58.

The crimes committed throughout this epoch in the name of religion were so deadly that the wickedness of such an assassination would not have been any greater, or so great, as that of other deeds of violence and treachery perpetrated even at solemn gatherings of bishops and presbyters. If a Metropolitan Bishop of Antioch like Stephen could enter into a plot to blast the character of an innocent Western bishop like Euphratas of Cologne, in order that his credit as an orthodox envoy of the Roman bishop might be ruined, and if that plot was so detestably immoral as even to disgust courtiers and worldlings, it is clear that men would not have been wanting who would regard it as an act of piety to get rid of Arius at so critical a moment. He may have been poisoned by a religious fanatic in the supposed cause of religion just as easily as Henry IV. or William the Silent were devoted in the name of religion to the assassin's blow.

But, if Arius was not poisoned, we must regard the event either as a miraculous interposition; or as one of those "visitations of God" which occur in the ordinary course of His providence; or as due to the singular temperament of Arius, of whom we are told that he was liable to paroxysms of dervish-like frenzy, and that at moments of extreme emotion his veins were wont to throb and swell with frightful vehemence. "It was," says Bishop Kaye, "a natural, though awfully sudden death." Whatever the truth may be, there is something revoltingly unchristian in the gloating way in which the miserable end of the unhappy presbyter is described by the majority of Church historians.

Then, in 337, Athanasius must have heard the news that Julius had succeeded Sylvester as Bishop of Rome: that Constantine was ill; that he had received baptism at the hands of Eusebius of Nicomedia; that he had

entrusted his will to an Arian presbyter favoured by his sister Constantia;[1] and lastly, that at noon on Whitsunday, May 20, he had breathed his last in a palace near Nicomedia, at the age of sixty-three—still wearing the white chrisom robe of his baptism, for which he had laid aside the imperial purple. There is great significance in his last recorded utterance, "Now let us cast away all duplicity." He had, as Gibbon says, "pursued the great object of his ambition through the dark and bloody paths of war and policy, and his mature age forfeited the reputation which he had acquired in his youth."

The faults of the Emperor had been great and not few in number, yet he had been honest and well-intentioned in the main. His three sons had but little of his statesmanship or his generosity, and they only succeeded to a fraction of his Empire. Unfortunately, however, they inherited from him the taste for discussion, the habit of despotism, and the vain delusion that they were competent to settle theological controversies by the exercise of arbitrary power. The ablest of the three was the second son Constantius, who was but twenty years old. He was well-trained, sober, and moral, but as his short figure and bow-legs contrasted with the martial manliness of his father's aspect, so too did his inferiority in mental gifts. Jealous and feeble, he tried to make up for his deficiencies by the pompous rigidity and motionless artificiality of his bearing. But all the time he had an uneasy sense that his courtiers saw through him, and that he was in reality the tool of the bishops and eunuchs of whom he posed as the master, and who entered with equal passion into a long series of ecclesiastical intrigues.

[1] This "Arian presbyter" is a very dubious personage mentioned by Rufinus. It is said that his name was Eutocius.

Athanasius must have heard with alarm and grief of the dreadful inauguration of the reign of Constantius by an indiscriminate massacre of the imperial family. The Caesars, Dalmatius and Annibalianus, nephews of Constantine, his brother Julius Constantius, another brother, and five near kinsmen, together with the Patrician Optatus and the Praefect Ablavius, were all butchered by the soldiery—not it was feared without the secret cognisance, if without the open approval, of Constantius himself. Of the collateral branches of the imperial house, two children only were suffered to escape. Of these Gallus was destined, later on, to be a new victim of the Emperor's jealousy, and his younger brother Julian to be the avenger of the murder of his father and of the wrongs of his house. Their safety was due to the kind care of Mark, Bishop of Arethusa, who hid them in the first days of horror;[1] due also in part to the fact that Constantius was childless, that the health of Gallus was weak, and that Julian was only six years old.

Athanasius must have heard further that Eusebius and the Arian presbyter were drawing Constantius over to their views, and this would have seemed to him an omen of the gloomiest import—an omen which was fulfilled during the long years in which Constantius was "his scourge and torment."[2] For more than a year the position of the archbishop remained unaltered; but on June 17, 338, Constantine II. wrote to the Alexandrians

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* iv. 91: *τῶν σεσωκότων τὸν ἐξάγιστον . . . καὶ διὰ κλοπῆς ὑπεξαγαγόντων εἰς οὗτος ἦν.* Gregory there relates the cruel treatment Mark received for having destroyed an idol-temple, and (unworthily) says it was a retribution on him for having saved Julian—*ὑπέρ οὗ τάχα μόνου ταῦτα δικαίως ἔπασχε καὶ πλείω προσπαθεῖν ἄξιος ἦν, ὅτι κακὸν τόσουτο σώζων ἐλάνθανε.* On the massacre, see *Hist. Ar.* sec. 69.

[2] *Hist. Ar.* sec. 70: *πότε οὖν οὗτος, τοιοῦτος ὢν καὶ τοιούτοις χαίρων δύναταί τι δίκαιον ἢ κατὰ λόγον φρονῆσαι; . . . γράφει καὶ γράφων μεταμελεῖται, καὶ μεταμελόμενος παροξύνεται, κ.τ.λ.*

informing them that he intended to restore to them the beloved teacher for whom they so deeply longed. In doing this, he said, he was but carrying out the secret intention of his father.

Constantine had divided his empire between his three sons, who were only twenty-one, twenty, and seventeen years old. To Constantine II. he had assigned the Gauls, to Constantius the East, and to Constans Italy and the West. The three Emperors met at Viminacium, and there, after having parcelled out the civilised world between them, they concurred in the restoration of Athanasius. Fortified with this triple permission, he travelled homewards through Constantinople. In an interview with Constantius at the Cappadocian Caesarea, he behaved with the magnanimous charity and consummate prudence which guided his actions. He was able afterwards to appeal to the Emperor himself whether he had abused this opportunity to utter one word of complaint either against his arch-enemy Eusebius or the many others who had done him wrong. He then travelled throughout Syria, and reached Alexandria in Nov. 338. He was received with an outburst of exultation.[1] The churches were filled with joy and thanksgiving, and the clergy regarded this as the happiest day of their lives.

But he had scarcely a moment's respite from the dogged tenacity of Eusebius and his followers. Scarcely had he resumed his duties before they charged him with two new crimes—first, with having been the cause of seditions, massacres, and banishments; next, with having diverted to his own purposes the dole of corn which Constantine had set apart for the widows of Libya and

[1] *Apol. c. Ar.* 7. Mr. Gwatkin argues that this return was in 337. *Arianism*, note cc.

Egypt. The refutation of both charges was easy. As to the first, he was able to prove to Constantius and Constans that the disorders had occurred while he was in Syria; that they were due to the civil, not to the religious administration; and that not a man in Alexandria had suffered through him. As to the second, he could show that the corn had been duly distributed. A third ground of trouble was that, though condemned by the infamous Council of Tyre, he had resumed the government of his see by an intervention of the Emperor alone. That was true; but whatever might have been thought of the technical irregularity, the complaint came with an ill grace from a popularity-hunting courtier like Eusebius; and Athanasius might have thought himself more than justified in despising the biassed decrees of a packed and ignoble council such as that of Tyre.

But Eusebius had acquired a boundless influence over the treacherous Constantius, who not only addressed to Athanasius a letter full of reproaches, but sanctioned the appointment of a new bishop in his place. This was the deposed Arian presbyter Pistus, on behalf of whom Eusebius sent an embassy to Rome. Meanwhile, however, Athanasius held a synod at Alexandria, and in 340 sent an encyclical letter to the Churches.[1] It was only by this sleepless vigilance that he was able to secure the least chance of justice. When the emissaries of Eusebius were confronted by the Egyptian presbyters who brought this encyclical to Rome, the chief of them decamped in alarm, and the others begged Pope Julius to decide the question.

The Emperor Constans, a man of depraved personal

[1] The letter of the eighty Egyptian and Libyan bishops is a weighty and noble document. It is preserved by Athanasius in the *Apology against the Arians*, secs. 3-19.

character, was orthodox in his belief, and he asked Athanasius to send him some copies of the Holy Scriptures (πυκτία), which he did. In 340 he added Gaul and Spain to his dominions by the defeat and murder of his brother Constantine II. His favour did not, however, soften the hostility of Constantius against the only great Eastern metropolitan who still maintained the Nicene symbol. In 340 a synod of ninety-seven bishops met at Antioch to dedicate the "Golden Basilica," of which Constantine I. had laid the foundations. Ninety-seven bishops were present, and they drew up a creed, known as "the Creed of the Dedication," originally written by Lucian, which would have been harmless if it had not been intended to supersede the creed of Nicaea. Eusebius had by this time succeeded in getting rid of the orthodox Bishop Paul on a false accusation, and in thrusting himself into the see of Constantinople. He seized the opportunity of finding a weightier person than Pistus for the see of Alexandria.[1] It was offered to Eusebius of Emesa, and, when he declined it, was bestowed on an Arian named Gregory, a Cappadocian, who, as a student at Alexandria, had received from Athanasius the utmost kindness. Gregory accepted the post, and made his way to Alexandria on March 23, under the protection of a civil and military escort. The atrocities which he there committed are almost inconceivable. Churches were desecrated, altars polluted, sacred stores pillaged; monks, priests, and virgins were beaten and slain; Jews and Pagans were encouraged to burst into Christian congregations, and to insult and maltreat the worshippers. Everything corresponded to the legendary vision of St. Antony, who was one day found weeping

[1] Eusebius of Caesarea died before the council met, and had been succeeded by Acacius.

and agitated, and said that he had dreamed that the table of the Lord was hedged round by mules who spurned it with their heels, and that he had heard a voice saying, "My altar shall be polluted."

Athanasius was then living in the precincts of the Church of St. Theonas, and, seeing that he was helpless to stem the tide of desecration, he fled to a place of concealment near the city, from which he despatched another encyclical, describing the miserable invasion of the Church of Alexandria, and warning all other Churches of their common danger. Shortly after Easter[1] he succeeded in getting on board ship, and, accompanied by two monks, Ammonius and Isidore, he made his way safely to Rome. One providential result of his banishment was that the Western Church profited by his learning and example. Four great capitals of Italy and Gaul—Rome, Milan, Aquileia, Trèves—were permeated by his noble influence.

At Rome, where his innocence was well known, he was received with the utmost honour by Pope Julius. Having laid his case before the Church, he dismissed all anxieties from his mind as much as possible, and occupied himself in the services of devotion. His visit lasted for more than three years, and produced a deep impression on the life of the West. It must be regarded as nothing less than the fixation of Roman theology and the beginning of Western monachism. The Romans up to this time had little or no knowledge of monastic institutions, and now for the first time they were able to learn at first hand the nature of ascetic discipline, and also to witness its effects on the lives of men. Ammonius, one of the "four Tall Brothers," of whom we shall read

[1] The date cannot be precisely fixed. It is not part of my object to enter into the minutiae of uncertain chronology.

in the Life of Chrysostom, was so completely detached from the world that neither Rome nor its institutions had any interest for him, nor would he visit any place in the city except the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul. Shortly afterwards, fearing that he would be made bishop, he fled and cut off one ear in order that he might be incapacitated for the office.[1] Isidore, on the other hand, charmed all men by his simplicity and geniality. Thus the beginning of monasticism in Italy was the result of the second exile of the great archbishop. The noble Marcella received her impulse to self-sacrifice from this visit, and began the reformation among the Roman ladies of which Jerome became the subsequent director.[2]

Athanasius occupied his exile in drawing up his *Exposition of the Faith*, and Church history profited by his enforced leisure. At Rome he was joined by Marcellus of Ancyra, whom the Eusebians had also driven from his see. Julius summoned a council at Rome to take cognisance of the case of both of them; but, after keeping his emissaries waiting for months, the Eusebians, in Jan. 341, returned a cavilling and unmannerly reply, which in the interests of peace Julius kept to himself. Later on they sent a fresh condemnation of Athanasius by the Synod of Antioch, and declared that want of notice, and the imminence of a Persian war, would prevent them from coming to Rome. Meanwhile Gregory was still behaving at Alexandria with the most inconceivable brutality, in which he was supported by

[1] Hence he is called παρωτής.—Niceph. xi. 37; Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 12.

[2] The technical terms of monastic life—monastery, coenobium, ascetae, anchorite, hermit, archimandrite, etc.—are all of Greek and Eastern origin; and beyond question monasticism invaded the Western from the Eastern Church; but the visit of Isidore and Ammonius cannot be regarded as certainly historic.

the Praefect Philagrius. Monks and virgins were beaten in his presence; widows and the poor were defrauded; an aunt of Athanasius would have been cast out unburied had not some friends of his represented the corpse as belonging to them. The aged confessor, Bishop Sarapammon, was driven into exile, and, as the climax of these horrors, the afflicted Church saw the venerable Potamon —the confessor-bishop who had played a worthy part both at Nice and at Tyre—so shamefully beaten on the neck that he was left for dead, and died shortly afterwards.[1] The memory of these troubles is traceable in the Festal Letter of Athanasius, written from Rome in 341.

In Nov. 342, tired of waiting for the Eastern bishops, Julius held a council at Rome, which, after hearing all the documents and some personal witnesses, such as Asclepas, Bishop of Gaza, pronounced the innocence of Athanasius, and acquitted Marcellus of the charge of heresy.[2] Towards the close of the year Eusebius of Nicomedia went to his long account. Dr. Neale calls him "one of the most hateful characters whom history records," but that title belongs rather, even in ecclesiastical history, to Theophilus of Alexandria. That he was more of a courtier than a bishop—that he was shifty, intriguing, unscrupulous—is unfortunately true. Some of his party had attempted to gain the same influence over Constans which he had gained over Constantius, but in this they were defeated by Maximin, the orthodox Bishop of Trèves.

After more than three years spent at Rome, Athanasius in 343 was summoned to Milan by the Emperor

[1] *Hist. Arian.* 13: ἄταφος ἐρρίφθη εἰ μὴ οἱ ὑποδεξάμενοι αὐτὴν ὡς ἴδιον νεκρὸν ἐξηνέγκαν.

[2] In his able letter to Dianius, Flacillus, etc. (Ath. *Apol. c. Ar.* 21) Julius gives an account of these decisions.

Constans, who received him kindly, and told him to join Hosius in Gaul, and to go with him to Sardica in Moesia, where towards the end of 343 a council of one hundred and seventy bishops met at the summons of Constantius and Constans. Sardica was in the domain of Constans, and this fact so completely paralysed the intrigues of the Eusebians that they were forced to resort to different tactics.

A dissension of the most impracticable kind at once arose between the Western and the Eastern bishops. The Westerns treated Athanasius as an innocent man, and received him into their communion. The Easterns, declaring that he had been condemned at Tyre and Antioch, refused to take their seats until he, Marcellus, Asclepas, and Lucius of Adrianople (who showed the chains in which he had been fettered by the Arians) were deprived of their seats. It was in vain that the most generous overtures of accommodation were made to them. They sullenly shut themselves up in their lodgings, and at last made their escape secretly from Sardica and got up a counter-council at Philippopolis, in the domains of Constantius. There they occupied themselves in condemning Julius, Hosius, and Athanasius, while the council at Sardica urged the faithful to contend earnestly for the sound faith and the innocence of the Alexandrian prelate. "Thus," says De Broglie, "within the limits of the same province there were two gatherings of Christian bishops, using the same forms, speaking the same language, calling on the same God, and occupied in mutually excommunicating each other."[1]

It rested, however, with Constantius to restore Athanasius, and he, so far from doing so, sent an order to the Alexandrian magistrates to behead him if he

[1] *L'Église et l'Empire*, iii. 72.

entered the city. A new persecution began; but at last, in 345, the pseudo-Bishop Gregory was killed in a tumult aroused by his own barbarities. Constantius, yielding to the urgent insistence of his brother Constans, who, amid his moral degradation, still retained his esteem for a good and great man, allowed Athanasius to return once more to his see. "Our clemency," he wrote, "no longer allows thee to be tossed about by the wild waves and stormy sea, driven from thy home and spoiled of thy goods." This sudden change of front was probably due in part to the honest indignation which Constantius felt when it was proved to him beyond doubt that Stephen, the Arian Bishop of Antioch, had stooped to a detestable trick, worthy of the most depraved worldling, in the endeavour to fix a charge of immorality on Euphratas of Cologne. Athanasius received the Emperor's letter at Aquileia. Before returning, he went to Constans at Trèves, and visited Rome to see Julius, who wrote a letter of the warmest congratulation to the Alexandrian Church.[1] After paying a second visit to Constans, he saw Constantius for the third time at Antioch, and received from him a solemn assurance that he would never again believe the accusations of his enemies. The Emperor begged of him as a favour that he would allow the use of a single church to the Arians at Alexandria. With politic readiness he promised to grant this if the Emperor would allow a single church to the orthodox followers of Eustathius at Antioch. At the Syrian Laodicea he was warmly welcomed by Apollinaris, and at Jerusalem by sixteen orthodox bishops. Finally, he re-entered Alexandria a second time on Oct. 21, 346, amid such

[1] Athanasius (*Apol.* 52) quotes the letter of Julius, but omits some of the paragraphs most laudatory to himself.—Socr. ii. 23.

universal rejoicings that "the day when Pope Athanasius came home" became a proverb for festivity. The people streamed out of Alexandria to meet him in hundreds of thousands like the Nile in flood. The plaudits of the assembled multitude, the air rich with incense, the ground covered with carpets and gorgeous tapestries, the waving of palm branches, the rolling unbroken continuity of shouts and clapping, the eager outstretched faces of the multitude, the roofs crowded with spectators, the streets blazing with illuminations, left an ineffaceable impression of triumph and joy.[1] But dearer to the placable heart of the archbishop was the peace which he restored, the charity which he evoked, the self-devotion which he rekindled, the spirit of forgiveness which enabled him to win back the hearts of many enemies. "In a word," he says, "there was such an emulousness for virtue that each family and each house seemed to become a church, from the love of holiness of their members, and their prayer towards God. And in the churches there was a peace deep and wonderful, and the bishops wrote to Athanasius and received from him the words of peace."[2] His feeling of gratitude to God is expressed in the Festal Letter for 347.

[1] See Bright, *Orations of St. Athan.* p. liii. Gregory of Nazianzus gives a rhetorical description of this triumph in *Orat.* xxi. secs. 27. 29, 31.

[2] *Hist. Arian.* sec. 25.

IX

Continued

FROM THE SECOND RETURN TILL THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD EXILE

(FROM AUTUMN 346 TO SPRING 356)

"If you hear that bishops are striving against bishops, and clergy against clergy, and laity against laity, even unto blood, be not disturbed thereby; for these things were foretold by Christ."—ST. CYRIL HIEROSOL. *Catech.* xiii. 40.

SECTION VI

FOR nearly five years Athanasius was left in comparative repose. He employed his time partly in the high duties of his pastoral office, partly in correspondence with orthodox bishops, of whom more than four hundred were in communion with him, and partly in literary work. To this period belong his letter *On the Nicene Definition*, his essay *On the Opinion of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria*, and the first sketch of his *Apology against the Arians*,—a collection of valuable documents which was afterwards appended to the Arian history. In 347 even Valens and Ursacius anathematised Arianism at Milan, recanted their accusations against Athanasius, and wrote an apologetic letter to

the Bishop of Rome.[1] It was not then known how hollow was their recantation, which was due only to their fear of Constans. About this time the archbishop gave to the Catechetical School of Alexandria a worthy head in the person of the blind scholar Didymus.

But in 350 the soldiers under Magnentius, in disgust at the neglect and immorality of Constans, revolted against him, murdered him, and made Magnentius Emperor. Athanasius thus lost his truest friend and protector. At present, however, Constantius was not in a position to annoy him. He had to deal with the revolt of Magnentius in the West and with that of Vetranio in Pannonia. Neither of these usurpers got any countenance from the archbishop. Grieved to the heart by the murder of Constans, of whom he could scarcely speak without tears, he yet remained true to Constantius, for whom he offered public prayers, and from whom he received a letter of encouragement and support, in which was the remarkable sentence, "It is my fixed purpose that you should always remain in your place as bishop." To that promise it was natural that Athanasius should frequently appeal.[2]

But by the summer of 353 Constantius was lord of the world, and was again free to carry out his determination to enforce a Semi-Arianism upon the whole Empire. Magnentius had been finally defeated at Mount Seleucus, and with his mother, his son, and his brother, had committed suicide. Vetranio had been quietly set aside.

[1] Valens and Ursacius were always Arians, and it is probable that all the Pannonian bishops had been influenced by Arius during his exile in Illyricum (Sulp. Sev. *Chron.* ii. 38). They appear, says Professor Stokes, as Arian leaders at every council and synod from 330 to 370, both in the East and West.

[2] *Hist. Arian.* secs. 24, 51. *Apol. ad Const.* 23 (the language slightly varies).

Constantius, more inflated than ever with the sense of his own grandeur, was the undisputed head of the Christian world. Valens had been with him on September 28, 351, while he remained praying in a church at Mursa during the battle between his troops and those of Magnentius; and by an astute artifice had gained early knowledge of the victory, which he pretended had been revealed to him by an angel. This trick had rendered him more influential than ever. Constantius was further influenced in a heretical direction by his marriage with Aurelia Eusebia, who was heart and soul with the Arian party.

The theological proclivities of this Emperor were most unfortunate. He mistook his own ignorance for exceptional knowledge. Even the Pagan historian saw through his absurd pretensions. "The Christian religion," says Ammianus, "is plain and simple, but Constantius confounded it with anile superstition. He roused many differences by curious inquiries, instead of reconciling them by his authority, and when these had spread in all directions, he propagated them by verbal disputes. He utterly ruined the postal service by allowing the use of the horses to troops of bishops, who were constantly galloping hither and thither to the various synods, as they call them, in the endeavour to enforce uniformity for their own opinions."

Already in 351 Valens and Ursacius had flung off the mask, recanted their recantation, and entered into a new conspiracy. They combined with George of Laodicea, Leontius of Antioch, Acacius of Caesarea, and others who had escaped from the Council of Sardica, and who could claim the active favour of the Emperor. In 352 Athanasius lost the support of Pope Julius. Liberius, the new Bishop of Rome, was at once assailed

with the old accusations against the Archbishop of Alexandria. The storm burst on May 19, 353. Athanasius thought it necessary to send five bishops, one of whom was his friend Serapion of Thmuis, to Constantius at Milan, to defend himself against new and old insinuations. But on May 23 arrived the *silentarius* Montanus forbidding him to send envoys, but saying that, "according to his request," he might visit Milan in person. Athanasius having made no such request, saw through the trap, and declined to go unless expressly bidden. Liberius had suggested that a council should be summoned, and, to please the Arians, Constantius held it at Arles. This council, at which neither Liberius nor Hosius were present, condemned Athanasius. Even Vincent, Bishop of Padua, the delegate from Rome, signed the condemnation. The only dissentient was the faithful Paulinus of Trèves, who was banished in consequence. Liberius deplored the timidity and unfaithfulness of Vincent, and wrote to Hosius, "I have resolved rather to die for God than abandon the truth." Alas! they little knew the disgrace and calamity which the future had in store for them!

In Lent 354 the plot thickened. Under the faithful ministry of Athanasius the churches were crowded so densely that some persons were injured by the press. Under these circumstances the people begged him to hold the services in an unfinished and undedicated church called the Caesareum. He was unwilling to do this lest he should give offence, for the site of the church was the property of the Emperor. But after a time he yielded to their urgency, and a new accusation was founded on this circumstance. He was also charged with a treasonable support of Magnentius, and with contumacy in not coming to Milan at the bidding of

Montanus. He saw the perils which were gathering around him, as he shows in a beautiful letter written at this period. The Abbot Dracontius had been elected bishop, and in fear of the crisis as well as out of preference for his monastic life, had fled from his duties. Athanasius wrote to recall him to the post of danger. Dracontius obeyed, and was subsequently banished. The letter is remarkable alike for its sober view of the ascetic life, which is regarded as less elevated and less needful than the life of practical duty, and also for its firm courage of conviction that it is our duty not "to serve the opportunity," but "to serve the Lord."

In 355 a yet heavier blow fell on the archbishop. He was again condemned by a large council assembled at Milan, and of all the assembled bishops only Eusebius of Vercellae, Lucifer of Calaris, Dionysius of Milan, and Maximus of Naples, finally refused to sign his condemnation. At this council there had been some remarkable scenes. The brave Eusebius of Vercellae, at that time the ablest of the Italian bishops, had entered the assembly with a copy of the Nicene Creed, and when asked to sign the condemnation of Athanasius, of whom he probably knew but little, he said, "Be it so; but first let every one sign this creed." Dionysius, Bishop of Milan, took up a pen to sign; but this was the opposite of what the Arian bishops wished, and Valens seized him by the arm and snatched the pen out of his hand. Eusebius, Dionysius, and Lucifer (who was kept in his house under surveillance) might easily have raised a riot, had they chosen to do so, among the orthodox Milanese. The Emperor sent for them to the palace, and in vain tried to cajole or intimidate them. The impetuous Lucifer bluntly told him that he was an Arian; that the Arians were precursors of Antichrist;

and that his victories proved nothing. Infuriated as he was by the remark, Constantius would still have been content if they would have signed the condemnation of Athanasius. "How can he be condemned unheard?" they said. "We are not here to avenge your private wrongs. As a bishop he must be judged by bishops, not by the Emperor. Do not confuse the canons with imperial decrees." "Canons?" exclaimed Constantius. "What I wish, *that* is a canon." So far had Caesarism gone that the Emperor could practically say *L'Église c'est moi.*[1]

The bishops were permitted, for fear of a popular disturbance, to retire unhurt, but in the night they were arrested in their bedrooms by the eunuch Eusebius; and on that occasion one hundred and forty-seven persons, clergy and laity, were banished. These brave men shook the dust off their feet, and, looking up to God, neither feared the threats of the Emperor nor turned traitors when the sword was bared. As they were carried in chains from city to city they proclaimed the holy faith, anathematised the Arian heresy, and denounced the apostasy of Ursacius and Valens. Lucifer in particular poured forth against the Emperor the sternest denunciations in language of rustic simplicity. Athanasius could only take comfort in the promise, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord taketh me up."

The one great object was to isolate Athanasius before striking the final blow. This could not be effectually accomplished so long as Liberius of Rome and Hosius of Cordova remained his firm friends.[2] It therefore became essential at all costs to separate them from his

[1] *Hist. Arian.* sec. 34.

[2] Athan. *Hist. Ar.* 33 : ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐγὼ βούλομαι τοῦτο κανών, ἔλεγε,

cause. The cooks, barbers, women, spies, ecclesiastics, eunuchs, and court officials, who ruled over the lord of the world with undisputed sway, hated the great bishop; and they were so powerful that any one who wished to get anything done applied to them. It might be truly said of Constantius, observes Ammianus with a sneer, that he had considerable influence with his head-chamberlain.[1] Naturally every great man—every man like Athanasius, Hilary, or Julian—was an object of execration to this callous egotist and to the gang of epicene intriguers by whom he was surrounded.[2] The feeble brain of the "ecclesiastical Claudius" had long been swimming with the vertigo of autocracy.

Accordingly the eunuch Eusebius was sent to Rome to attempt, first of all, to win Liberius by bribes, and, if those failed, to coerce him with threats. He begged the Pope to do two things; to sign the condemnation of Athanasius, and to communicate with the Arians. "This," he said, "the Emperor wishes and orders you to do." Then, showing the gifts, he grasped him by the hands, and said, "Obey the king, and accept these presents."

Liberius firmly refused. Athanasius, he said, had been twice absolved by fair and free synods, and acquitted by the Church of Rome. If the Emperor would call another synod, free from all imperial influence or military terror, to examine into the question

νομιζέσθω. When Athanasius adds that the Emperor bared his sword against the bishops, the phrase is doubtless metaphorical.

[1] Amm. Marc. xviii. 4; xxii. 4. In xxi. 16 he says that Constantius was entirely under the influence of women and a chorus of thin-voiced, applauding eunuchs.

[2] *Hist. Arian.* 6: *τὴν παρὰ τὸν βασιλέα παρὰ τῶν γυναικῶν σύστασιν.* Id. 38: *σπαδόντων αἵρεσιν.* Constantia the aunt of Constantius, his second wife Aurelia Eusebia, Albia Dominica the wife of Valens, and Justina the wife of Valentinian I., were all Arians.

once more, be it so; but he would neither condemn Athanasius at his order nor condone Arianism. It was for bishops, and not for emperors, to decide in theological questions. But the dull Constantius thought that he could settle theological questions by saying to all who opposed the Arian heresy, "The doctrine you oppose is mine; if it is false how comes it that God has put the world in my hands?"[1]

The eunuch went away in great indignation, and, managing to get into the Church of St. Peter, he presented his gifts there; but Liberius cast them forth as an unhallowed offering. Eusebius returned and roused to fury the whole consistory of eunuchs, by whom the Emperor was surrounded. Emissaries were sent to drag the Pope, if necessary even by violence, into the Emperor's presence. To avoid tumults, he started with them secretly by midnight, but refused to condemn Athanasius, and compared himself to the three children before Nebuchadnezzar. He was banished to Beroea in Thrace, and the deacon Felix became Pope in his place. Rome was handed over to Arian terrorism.[2] When the Emperor sent Liberius fifty pieces of gold for his journey, he declined it, saying that it would be wanted for soldiers and eunuchs. When the Empress sent him money, he sent it back, saying that she had bishops among her friends who needed it more. Eusebius pressed gold upon him. "Am I a criminal," he asked indignantly, "that the ravager of churches offers me alms? Go, wretch, and think first of all of becoming a Christian!" The grandeur of the scene, when the Bishop of Rome

[1] Lucifer Cal. *Pro Athanas.* p. 22. The spirited conversation afterwards held between the Emperor and Liberius is translated at length by Cave, *Lives of the Fathers* (St. Athan.)

[2] At the election of Felix, three eunuchs represented the Roman people, and three court prelates the Suburbicarian bishops!

was sent forth a prisoner as a reward for his fidelity to the innocent, struck even the Pagan historian.[1]

But alas! the Pope failed to maintain his lofty attitude. Exile broke down the spirit which threats could not terrify nor bribes cajole. He lingered for two years —aged, miserable, alone—for it was a part of the cruel policy of the Emperor and his eunuchs to separate the exiles from all communication with each other. At last, in 358, he fell. He wrote to the Emperor a letter full of anguish and feebleness, and, longing to return to his people, signed a condemnation of Athanasius and a creed which sacrificed the word *Homoousios*. Athanasius passes lightly and with noble lenience over his lapse. The crime rests, he says, not with him who was terrified, but with those who slowly tortured him into guilty acquiescence.[2] That he had not forfeited the confidence and affection of his people even by his lapse is certain. When Constantius was in Rome they assailed his ears, in the very crisis of a horse race, with their shouts of "One God, one Christ, one bishop." But how terribly the orthodox party felt his defection is shown by the passionate complaint of Hilary, "Here is Arian perfidy! Anathema to thee, O Liberius! Twice and thrice anathema, O prevaricator Liberius, to thee!"[3]

Still sadder had been the earlier lapse of the venerable Hosius, "the father of the bishops," whose head was now white with the snows of a hundred winters.

[1] Ammianus Marcellinus, xv. 7. He is, however, strangely unjust to Athanasius, whom he calls "ultra professionem altius se efferentem."

[2] The attempt of Zaccaria (*De Commentitio Liberii lapsu*) to deny the fall of Liberius breaks down under the contemporary testimony of Athanasius, Hilary, and Jerome. See *Hist. Arian.* 41: ὁ δὲ Λιβέριος, ἐξορισθείς, ὕστερον μετὰ διετῆ χρόνον ὤκλασε, καὶ φοβηθεὶς τὸν ἀπειλούμενον θάνατον, ὑπέγραφε.

[3] Hil. *Fragm.* 6.

He had been a confessor under Maximian, had been the president of the Councils of Nice and Sardica, and had been at the Council of Eliberis fifty years before. At first he answered Constantius with dignified firmness. "I am," he wrote, "your grandsire in age. God entrusted to you the kingdom, to us the affairs of the Church. And as he who tries to steal away thy power resists the ordinance of God, so do thou also fear lest in dragging to thyself the affairs of the Church, thou shouldst become liable to a grievous charge. 'Give,' it has been written, 'the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God.'" The remonstrance was in vain. Constantius, "the champion of impiousness, and the emperor of heresy," sent for Hosius, and kept him for a year in Sirmium, "neither fearing God, nor reverencing his father's regard for Hosius, nor honouring his old age—this new Ahab and Balthasar." Hosius, like the rest, was kept apart from all his friends; for Constantius forgot, in the blindness of his malice, that though each confessor was separated in body from his fellows, yet each had God by his side, and therefore had more to defend him than all the soldiers of the Empire.[1] To the Emperor's eternal disgrace, the venerable old man, bewildered by discussions for which his brain had become unfit, was tortured, terrified, beaten, attacked by plots against his kinsfolk, and in all ways so shamefully mishandled that at last in 357 his feeble body gave way. Longing only for peace, understanding neither what he did nor what his tormentors said, to the grief and pity of the good, he signed one of the "Arianising" creeds of Sirmium. Athanasius, whom he refused to pronounce guilty, drops a tear of compassion over a lapse for which the aged confessor can be

[1] *Hist. Arian.* 46.

hardly held responsible.[1] It reflects far more infamy on his Arian persecutors than on himself. They could enjoy the detestable triumph of having perverted the actual president of the Council of Nice, now reduced to the mere ghost and shadow of what he once had been. On his deathbed, however, he repudiated his fatal concession, and once more pronounced his malediction on the Arian creed.[2]

Long before the endurance of these two great champions had been broken down, Constantius and his party of bishops and eunuchs felt that the time had come to strike a deadly blow at Athanasius. Nothing can more strongly prove the influence of the archbishop than the fact that he now stood out as the sole enemy of whom the Emperor was afraid. Gallus had been swept aside almost as soon as he had been set up, and in 355, for the first time during seventy years, the world saw only a single Augustus, with not even a subordinate Caesar to assist him. The world was at his feet, but he was as uneasy as Haman, because there was one man who would neither yield to him nor flatter him. True that this was a Christian bishop, a man without arms, without guards, without wealth, without political power. He was neither an intriguing courtier nor a conspiring general, nor a dangerous tribune of the people. He was only a humble servant of God passing his whole days in prayer and almsgiving between a cell and a church ;—yet the master of the world was plotting every possible means by which to get rid of him. In August 355 Diogenes, an imperial notary, had been despatched on a futile mission to try to get him out of Alexandria.

[1] *Apol. de Fuga*, sec. 5. Hilary calls this Sirmian formula "*Sirmiensis blasphemia*," "*fides infidelis*," and "*Hosii deliramentum*."

[2] *Hist. Arian.* 45. On Hosius, see Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. xlii. 3.

On Jan. 5, 356, another notary named Hilarius, accompanied by Duke Syrianus, was sent to take more decisive measures. Athanasius, supported by all his clergy and people, refused to leave his place unless the envoys could produce a letter from the Emperor. On Jan. 18 Syrianus swore "by the life of the Emperor" that no change should be made until such a letter was procured, and until the Alexandrian Church had sent an embassy to Constantius.[1] Meanwhile he concentrated his troops about the city to the number of 5000, and at midnight on Feb. 8, while Athanasius and his flock were gathered at a vigil service in the Church of St. Theonas, the church was surrounded with guards, and Syrianus with his soldiers prepared to burst into the sacred precincts. Athanasius, undaunted by the imminent peril, took his seat on his episcopal throne, and bade his deacon to intone the 136th psalm while the people repeated the response, "For his mercy endureth for ever." Before it was finished the doors had been forced open, and the church was filled with shouting soldiers in full armour, who bent their bows and fiercely brandished their clubs and naked swords. The terror caused by the flash of arms in the lamplight left a deep impression.[2] Many were wounded by arrows, many were trampled to death in the press; the virgins were in agonies of fright. Only the archbishop sat calmly on his throne and urged all to pray. The clergy besought him to

[1] De Broglie (*L'Égl. et l'Emp.* iii. 312) thinks that it was at this time that Antony came to Alexandria to support Athanasius. The legend of him says that he was a hundred years old, and died shortly afterwards. To this visit belongs the anecdote of his consoling Didymus for his blindness by the possession of the eternal inward light.

[2] *Hist. Arian.* 81: Καὶ τὰ ξίφη ἀντέλαμπον τῷ ἐκ τῶν λυχνῶν φωτί.

escape, but, like a captain on a sinking vessel, he declared that he would not move from that scene of violence and plunder till they had secured their own safety. When most of them had made good their escape, the monks and clergy seized hold of Athanasius, who was now half fainting from the press and excitement,[1] and, aided no doubt by his diminutive figure, succeeded in dragging him unnoticed through the gates, though he was almost torn to pieces in the rush.[2] Once outside the church, as soon as he recovered from his swoon, he thanked God for having enabled him to escape without betraying his people, and then did not hesitate to make good his flight. He knew that the Arians were thirsting for his blood. He was no fanatic, and had not the diseased passion for thrusting himself into needless martyrdom. God had given him his life for high and holy ends. It was still most necessary for the defence of the Church. So "he vanished, no one knew whither, into the darkness of the winter night." He knew that he could have rendered to his enemies no more decided service than to suffer himself to be arrested. Christ had said, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another." He obeyed the divine command, and hid himself "for a little moment until the tyranny should be overpast." He

> "Stayed the arm
> Of tyrannous power, and learning's sophist tone,
> Keen-visaged seer, alone.
> The many bowed before an idol-priest,
> Lord of the world's rank feast.

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[1] *Apol. ad Const.* 25 : τοῦ Θεοῦ καλύπτοντος καὶ ὁδηγοῦντος. *Apol. de Fug.* 24 : οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν ὄντες ἐκεῖ μοναχοὶ καί τινες τῶν κληρικῶν ἀνελθόντες εἵλκυσαν ἡμᾶς. A fuller account is given in the Second Testimony of the Alexandrian laity (*Hist. Arian.* 81). The corpses of those who perished were secretly disposed of—"martyrs of the most pious Constantius." [2] ἑλκόμενος, παρ' ὀλίγον διεσπάσθη.

In the dark night, 'mid the saints' trial sore
He stood, then bowed before
The Holy Mysteries—he their meetest sign,
Weak vessel, but divine."[1]

At first he probably hoped that the tempest would speedily spend its violence, and that by going in person to Constantius he might be able to secure justice. But he soon found that such a hope was vain. Constantius sent a wicked Cappadocian named George, an ignorant Arian, a glutton, and a fraudulent pork contractor—to usurp the episcopal throne,[2] and Athanasius at once wrote his letter to the Egyptian and Libyan bishops to warn them against the specious creed of the usurper. George with his myrmidons arrived at the beginning of Lent (Feb. 24, 357). He acted as though Christianity had no gentleness in it, and began a new orgy of persecution. Twenty-six orthodox bishops were deposed and exiled, more than thirty others fled, and a crowd of unfit and youthful Arian pretenders were thrust into their places. Faithfulness to the Nicene Creed became perilous even to laymen and to the poor. After eighteen months George was chased out of Alexandria by the people; he remained nine months in exile and then returned, while his opponents were severely punished by the civil power. On the Sunday before Pentecost, when the Catholics had met to worship in a cemetery, a fierce Manichean general named Sebastian burst upon them. Fortunately most of the congregation had already retired, but a few virgins still remained in prayer. These were seized by the brutal soldiery, and Sebastian, having kindled a fire, set them before

[1] Newman, *Lyra Apostolica*, xciv.

[2] Amm. Marcell. xxii. 11: "Professionis suae oblitus quae nihil nisi justum et lene suadet."

it, and tried to compel them to say that they were of the Arian faith. But when he saw that even these weak women preferred martyrdom to apostasy, he stripped them and beat them in the face till they were unrecognisable. He then seized forty men and scourged them so terribly with stiff and thorny branches of fresh-cut palm that some of them died. Their bodies were huddled away unburied, and the survivors were banished to the great oasis. While such horrors were taking place at Alexandria it was clear that the life of the archbishop would not have been safe for a single hour from the soldiers of George. All thoughts of appealing to Constantius became absurd when news came to Athanasius that the Emperor had written a letter full of sneers and reproaches, in which he denounced him as a pestilent and turbulent rebel, a proscribed and cowardly exile, who deserved nothing short of death ten times over.[1]

Athanasius therefore, ceasing to struggle against the inevitable, retired into the desert. Among the monks and hermits, from the Nitrian mountains and the "wilderness of cells" to the Scetis and the pathless solitudes of Thebais, he had countless friends who were ready if need were to sacrifice even life for his sake. The Abbot-hermits Pior and Pambon and Macarius were still living,[2] and into the wild and barren wastes no foot of Arian bishop or Manichean duke could follow him. There were times when he even "lived with the wild beasts."[3] Nothing

[1] See two of the letters of Constantius in the *Apol. ad Const.* secs. 30, 31. He calls him ὁ μοχθηρότατος Ἀθανάσιος . . . καὶ τῇ κοινῇ πολιτείᾳ λυμαινόμενος, μυρίοις ἔνοχος ὢν κακοῖς, whereas George is always ὁ σεμνότατος, and worthy of the warmest praises.

[2] If Antony ever existed, he was by this time dead. The legend says that he left to Athanasius the sheepskin cloak which the archbishop had originally presented to him.

[3] *Apol. ad Const.* 34 : πάντα γὰρ ὑπέμεινα καὶ θηρίοις συνῴκησα.

was easier than concealment, and even concealment was not often necessary, for if some chance emissary came to track him out, the monks had swift ways of flashing intelligence to each other from laura to laura and hermitage to hermitage. A boat on the Nile or a mule on the desert sands left no traces which could be pursued. It is unfortunate that he never recorded his adventures, for his life during those six years must have been full of romantic incidents and hairbreadth escapes. From the remotest deserts, from cells and tombs and mountain caves, he still continued to rule his Church and to influence the farthest quarters of the Christian world. For, as Rufinus says, the world at this time could provide him with no other place of refuge. Tribunes, praefects, counts, the whole army, were egged on by imperial decrees to hunt him down, and large rewards were offered either for his head or for his living person.[1] His most frequent residence seems to have been the monastery of Phbou, opposite Diospolis parva, on the east bank of the Nile, where at one time the General Artemius came with his troops to arrest him. He was ordered to pursue him even to Ethiopia, and to bring him back dead or alive. Yet he escaped the emissaries of the tyrant. From his friends he constantly received letters which kindled him to fresh efforts, and beguiled the weariness of his exile. Nor was he dependent for information on letters only. Tradition says that from time to time, with infinite peril, he visited Alexandria in disguise. Once, if the story be true, he was concealed in the chamber of the virgin Eudaemonis.[2] At another

[1] Rufin. i. 16.

[2] Compare Sozom. v. 6 with Pallad. *Vit. Patr.* viii. 136. Palladius professes to have heard the story from Eudaemonis herself in her old age.

time his abode for a long period was a dry cistern.[1] Most of his time was doubtless spent as a monk among monks, or as a hermit among hermits. Familiar from youth upwards with the ascetic discipline, it came to him neither as a novelty nor as a hardship, and indeed there must have been times when the infinite repose of those burning solitudes among simple brethren seemed like a blessed relief from the whirl and turmoil of contention with foes alike unsleeping and unscrupulous. There would be no need for him in the dazzling noons to occupy his hand with the busy idleness of matweaving. His thoughts were in perpetual activity, and during those years of exile and wandering he found time to write books which are rich in personal, historical, and theological interest.[2] The resolution which remained undaunted when he exchanged the almost royal position of Pope of Alexandria for that of a hunted and hated fugitive could only have been supported by strong religious faith. He was now old, and saw no prospect before him but that of death in the desert, yet his courage never quailed, and his cheerfulness remained undimmed.

One of the fruits of his enforced leisure was the *Apology to Constantius*, in which he once more defends himself against an outburst of disgraceful calumnies.

1. Of these the most dangerous was that he had tried to set Constans against his brother. Athanasius appeals to God in witness that he had never said a word against Constantius to his kind protector Constans.

[1] Rufin. i. 18, Sozom. iv. 10. He alludes to such possibilities in *De Fuga*, 17.

[2] "We may still read his words among the tombs of the Pharaohs in the cave of Abdelkurna. The inscription in Boeckh, 8607 (quoted by Fialon, p. 133), is a letter of Athanasius from the ruins of Thebes."—Gwatkin, p. 154.

If he had done so Constans was not a person to be so lightly set against an Emperor and a brother, nor did Athanasius ever forget the duty of not cursing a ruler. Further, he had never seen or spoken to Constans alone, nor had he interchanged any letters with him.

2. Still more groundless was the charge that he had corresponded with the usurper Magnentius, of whom he knew nothing. What should he write to such a man? Should he write to praise him for having murdered his imperial friend? Constantius could produce no tittle of evidence, spoken or written, for such a charge.

3. Was it not almost ludicrous to make a crime out of the use for divine service of the unfinished Caesareum? The same thing had been done in many other cases and no blame had ever been attached to any one for a mere arrangement with no object but that of convenience and edification.

4. He was accused of disregarding the Emperor's summons. He would have been quite ready to come had the emissaries produced any command to that effect. But this they had not been able to do.

These are his main points of defence, but it is not certain that his *Apology* was ever allowed to reach the hands of Constantius.

Another treatise of this period is the *Apology for his Flight*. He had been taunted with cowardice and the desertion of his flock. He proves decisively from Scripture and from common sense that it was his duty to abstain from throwing away his life; and he says, with a sigh, that a hunted fugitive, daily liable to be attacked by his enemies, deems death the lighter evil of the two.[1]

[1] *Apol. de Fug.* 17.

A third work, written at the request of Bishop Serapion and addressed to monks, was the important and interesting *History of the Arians*, which furnishes us with the documents and events of that internecine conflict chiefly between the years 336 and 347. It is very vivid and impassioned. In it he launches out into the most unmeasured invectives against the Emperor, a man whom he had personally addressed with such profound forms of respect. The "Most pious" and "Most clement" Emperor becomes on the one hand a Pharaoh, an Ahab, a Belshazzar, a Pilate, an Antichrist—a man self-abandoned to the future doom of fire; and on the other a mere *Kostyllios* or "Connikin," the murderer of his kinsmen and the imbecile slave of his own eunuchs. He does not seem to have been quite easy in adopting such language, for he gives stringent orders to Serapion that the manuscript is to be returned to him, and that no copy of it is to be made. He gives as his reason for this the humbleness of his own theological attainments, but other reasons were obviously behind. If, however, Athanasius was guilty of the fault of thus speaking with scorn of the man whom he had addressed with sounding epithets, it may partly be that the more he came to know of Constantius the more entirely he despised him.[1] In any case, Athanasius was not more blameworthy for his courtly language than theologians have shown themselves in all ages, whether in the court of Constantine, or of Phocas, or Henry VIII., or James I., or Charles II. Adulation sounds more extravagant when we read it in a language in which familiarity has not entirely obliterated the real significance of words. Its value and meaning must be discounted. It must be understood

[1] A similar change of tone is observable in the language of Hilary about Constantius.

to be in many cases only formal and official. After all, Athanasius may have meant little more by the terms in which he had addressed Constantius than is implied by such phrases as "Most religious and gracious," or "Most Christian king." His fault was indeed a fault, but it is so human that we must not censure it as though it were some strange and inexcusable sin.

Besides these works he wrote during this period both his circular letter to the bishops of Egypt and Libya, and in all probability his four powerful dogmatic orations against the Arians, which remained for centuries the chief stronghold of Nicene orthodoxy. The first, second, and third of these orations are devoted to the refutation of objections and the discussion of Scripture proofs of the Deity of Christ. The fourth is considered by Cardinal Newman to be a series of memoranda on Sabellian and other forms of heresy attributed to Marcellus and his school.

But meanwhile, under the shadow of that dangerous imperial interference in Church affairs, the "Caesarean-Papism," against which Athanasius energetically protested, heresy acquired ever greater developments.[1] "We see," he says, "a new spectacle nowadays, and it is an invention of the Arian heresy. Heretics and the Emperor Constantius meet together that both he, under the pretext of episcopal sanction, may act by the civil power against whom he wills, and may persecute without being called a persecutor; and that they, exercising the Emperor's autocracy, may plot against whomsoever they will—that is, against all who are not as impious as themselves. And so we might see the whole thing managed among them like a comedy on a stage." But it was in vain that Athanasius, like Hosius, repu-

[1] *Hist. Arian.* 52.

diated the intrusion of Byzantinism into theology. For many a long year to come it was destined to run its course.

The extreme left wing of the Arian party was occupied by such men as Aetius of Antioch and Eunomius of Cappadocia. Those who shared in the opinions of the latter were named Eunomians, or Anomoeans, because they openly declared that the Son was *unlike* the Father, in that He was begotten.

At the other extreme, and therefore less distant from the orthodox, were the Eusebians, many of whom were only Semi-Arians, who held the Homoiousian doctrine that "the Son was of like substance" with the Father, and who were willing to give to the word "*like*" the greatest possible latitude. This party was headed by Basil of Ancyra and George of Cappadocia. Basil was a prelate of eminent respectability,[1] and Athanasius always speaks with sympathy of those who, like him, were called Semi-Arians, but whose objection was far more to the word *Homoousion* than to the doctrine which it implied. They thought that, besides being non-Scriptural, the word furnished an excuse for the counter extremes of Marcellus of Ancyra and Photinus of Sirmium, who "confounded the Persons" of the Trinity. If by abandoning a word they could re-establish peace and satisfy the Emperor, they considered Athanasius too obstinate in his refusal to do so.

Between these parties were bishops formed in the school of Eusebius of Nicomedia, less blunt than the Anomoeans, more determined than the Semi-Arians. They were the Herodians of the fourth century. They were courtiers and politicians quite as much as theologians, and were represented by such men as Acacius,

[1] He had superseded Marcellus, and had been condemned at Sardica.

Ursacius, Valens, and Eudoxius. The latter, though notoriously friendly to the reckless Aetius, had managed to thrust himself into the see of Antioch.[1]

The agitations caused by these parties and their common embarrassments were deplorable. The number, confusion, and vacillation of the formulas which they circulated attest their difficulties. From Sirmium alone there issued at least five different creeds.[2] The Semi-Arians, of whom Athanasius never despaired, were sincerely shocked by the bold impieties of Aetius. All men were eager for some decisive council to put an end to miseries and mutual recriminations.

Constantius had fixed on Nicomedia[3] as the place for the council, when suddenly the city was destroyed by a terrible earthquake, which buried the Bishop Cecrops in the ruins of his church and the Governor Aristaenetus in the ruins of his palace. The earthquake was followed by a conflagration, and Nicomedia became impossible. Then the eunuch Eusebius suggested the division of the council into two, which, when separate, could be more easily manipulated, and which would diminish the enor-

[1] The relations of these parties were illustrated at Sirmium on May 22, 359, where, at a small synod, Mark of Arethusa drew up an Acacian creed, which declared that "the Son was like to the Father *in all things*, according to the Scriptures," but forbad the use of the word substance (*ousia*). Valens subscribed, omitting at first the words "*in all things*"; Basil of Ancyra subscribed, adding "in all things *as to will, subsistence, existence, and being*," and adding a denunciation of the Anomoeans. Clearly this Semi-Arianism was not hopelessly removed from orthodoxy. Eudoxius, however, when he dared, was not only an Anomoean, but supported that cause by the most scandalous jests.

[2] In 347; in 351 (with twenty-seven anathemas); in 357, which Hilary (*De Syn.* 11) calls "a blasphemy" (Athan. *De Syn.* 28); in 358, and "the Dated Creed" in 359. See Bright, *Athan. Hist. Writings*, p. lxxxiii.

[3] He had thought of Nicaea, that there might be a Nicene Council for the *Homoiousion* as well as for the *Homoousion*; but this was considered unsafe.

mous expenses incurred by the service of public conveyances which were put at the disposal of the bishops.[1] Rimini and the Isaurian Seleucia were fixed upon as the two places of meeting, and Acacius undertook to manage the Synod of the East, while Valens and Ursacius, who spoke Latin, kept an eye on the Synod of the West. The selection of Seleucia, however, was not agreed upon till after six months of discussion; and meanwhile, "to keep their hands in" at the work of creed-making, Constantius issued in 359 the formula which was held up to general scorn as "the Dated Creed." It exhibited two instances of blundering bad taste. It was *dated* by the year of the Consuls,[2] in order to show, says Athanasius with keen sarcasm, the exact year, and month, and day (May 22, 359) in which *the Catholic Faith was set forth;* and it not only denied that the Son was everlasting (ἀΐδιος), but blasphemously gave to the poor idol of an Emperor the names of "Eternal" (αἰώνιος) and of "Lord" (δεσπότης). The "Eternal Constantius" was the first to grow ashamed of this monstrous adulation, and ordered the copies of the document to be suppressed.[3] This "Dated Creed" declared that the Son was "*like* the Father *in all things.*"

[1] Pagans laughed and without ceasing at the spectacle of bishops burdening the public treasury while they ran distractedly hither and thither to decide what they were to believe.—Amm. Marc. xxi. 16. Some bishops, to diminish the scandal, came at their own expense and lived with their brethren.—Sulp. Sev. ii. 21; De Broglie, iii. 419.

[2] *De Synod.* 3: "In the consulship of the illustrious Flavius Eusebius and Flavius Hypatius." "The faith itself," said Hilary, "has become a thing of times and seasons rather than of Scripture. Every year gives birth to a new creed; there are as many creeds as wills, as many dogmas as tempers."—*Ad Constant.*

[3] Id. 29. This book of Athanasius was written towards the close of 359. At first, however, Constantius had been highly pleased with the title—"a justitia declinavit ita intemperanter ut aeternitatem . . . aliquoties assereret ipse dictando, etc."—Amm. Marc. xv. 1. Arcadius writes to Honorius as "the brother *of my eternity*" in 398. One is reminded of

At Rimini more than four hundred bishops met in July 359, under the control of the Praefect Taurus, who opened the session by reading a long letter from the Emperor. Some seventy heretical bishops were present, and Valens, seizing his opportunity, got up when the letter had been read, and proposed to the assembly the Dated Creed. "Do not," he said, "divide the Church about words, and those not in Scripture. This creed is simple, Scriptural, unspeculative; and the Emperor has approved of it." But the good Fathers, unaccustomed to these showers of creeds, declared that they had not yet to learn what they believed. With great alacrity and in brief time they rejected the innovation, declared Valens and his party to be heretics, adhered to the creed of Nice—the only one with which they were familiar—and as early as July sent ten deputies to convey these decisions to Constantius. These deputies, chosen with the simplicity which marked the whole conduct of the orthodox bishops, were young men of insufficient learning and caution. Valens, on the other hand, sent other emissaries much more prudently selected and familiar with the ways of courts.

Constantius, angry as he was at the turn which events had taken, and all the more so because he had promised the consulship to Taurus if he managed things as he wished, adopted his usual tactics, and preferred diplomacy to violence. He determined to lead the deputies the same kind of dance which Caligula had done to Philo and the Jewish embassy from Alexandria, though in a more decorous manner. From Sirmium

the story of the Duke of Orleans, who, on hearing from his secretary the words "*feu Roi* d'Espagne" (*late* king of Spain), asked indignantly, "*Feu* Roi, monsieur?" to which the secretary answered, in trepidation, "Monseigneur, *it is a title which they take!*" Eusebius speaks of "unutterable flattery" (ἄλεκτος εἰρωνεία) in the court of Constantine, but it was nothing to that in the court of Constantius.

he set out for Constantinople, and told the deputies to follow him there. From Constantinople, on a new pretext, he started for Adrianople, writing to the Council at Rimini that the decision about creeds was a matter so important that he could not take part in it until he was free from political distractions. From Adrianople they were summoned to a Thracian city named Nikè, and there — when they had been thus thoroughly wearied out—they were plied with arguments for signing a creed which simply declared that "the Son was like the Father," and which forbade altogether the use of the word essence (*ousia*). After a few days these ill-chosen delegates consented to sign, and Constantius sent them back with a letter to Taurus ordering all the council to accept the creed which had been signed by their deputies.

The unhappy bishops, shut up in a little town, without resources, suffering from cold and privation, watching with despair the fall of the early snows which would soon enclose them in the impassable barriers of the Alps, and separate them for many months from all chance of visiting their neglected flocks, were to the last degree impatient to get home. Three of them had come all the way from Britain. There were no great theologians, no resolute leaders among them. All the most eminent champions of the Nicene faith were dead, or were in exile, or had succumbed. They were stunned and bewildered by the incessant enginery of astute sophisms, wire-drawn distinctions, and plausible appeals. Their deputies came back, crestfallen from their submission. "We must get back at all costs," said some of them. "Why, then, do you not sign?" asked Valens. "Are you Christians or Athanasians? Are you worshippers of Jesus Christ or of the word *Consubstantial?*"

One after another they yielded and went away, till only about twenty continued resolute. "Sign," said Valens, "and then append to your signature any anathema against Arius that you like, and I will myself utter it aloud in the cathedral." They agreed; and Valens in the cathedral anathematised "all who said that Jesus Christ is not God, Son of God, Eternal, and, above all, who said that He is a creature." He only made the unauthorised and destructive addition—"a creature *as other creatures.*" Thus by bribery, by cajolement, by fear, by ignorance, by worry, the Western bishops, some sooner, some later, were induced to abandon the watchword of Nicaea.

Then the bishops all went home, some boldly defending their defection, others declaring that they had given up *a word* but not *a belief*, others with a deep sense of guilt and humiliation. And then it was that, in the bold hyperbole of Jerome, "The whole world groaned, and was amazed to find itself Arian." A council more numerous than that at Nice had been browbeaten and deceived into the acceptance of an Arian creed.[1]

On Sept. 24, two months before the disgraceful issue of the Council of Rimini, the Eastern Fathers had met at Seleucia. Hilary of Poictiers, who had been banished from his diocese by Constantius in 356, had meanwhile written his books *On Synods* and *On*

[1] The authorities for the Council of Rimini are Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Hilary, Sulpicius Severus (*Hist. Sacr.* ii.), Rufinus, Jerome (*Dial. adv. Lucifer*, 18, 19). The Church historians, Socrates, Sozomen, Philostorgius, etc.; Tillemont, viii.; Montfaucon, *Vit. S. Athan.*; Labbé, *Conc. Sacros.* ii. 791-801. The best *résumé* of the facts is given by De Broglie, iii. 413-427. See too Bright, *Hist. Treatises*, lxxix. f.; *Life of St. Athanasius*, lxxxvii. f.; Newman, *Arians*, 359 f.; and for still briefer notices, see Gibbon, iii. 80, and Hooker, v. c. 42 (mainly from Gregory). The decrees of Rimini were anathematised at Toledo 230 years later. - Mansi, ix. 986.

the Trinity to counteract Arianism and to win back the more conscientious Semi-Arians into communion with the Church. His object was pacific, and he determined to present himself at Seleucia, the only Latin and the only exile there. Besides himself there were but eleven defenders of the Nicene faith. Of the one hundred and fifty bishops present some forty were extreme Arians who adopted the views of Aetius, while the rest were Semi-Arians, and some were politicians like Acacius. Hilary's object, like that of Athanasius, was to induce the moderate Arians to accept the *truth* conveyed by the word *Homoousion*, even if they declined to accept the word itself.[1] But into the history of the Council of Seleucia and its futile termination I will not here enter, since the reader will find it related in the Life of Hilary. Suffice it to say that when Leonas had dismissed the council with disgust, Acacius, the leader of the heterodox party, cared no more for anything that the council might do or not do. He went away to Constantius with Eudoxius of Antioch, Aetius, and Eunomius. Hilary went also, and "the Athanasius of Gaul" was thus confronted with the enemies of the Nicene faith. Even now all might have gone well had not the envoys from Rimini brought at that time the unhappy and vapid decrees of that council. Constantius hesitated no longer. He enforced the acceptance of the creed of Rimini, and banished on the one hand Basil of Ancyra and all for whom that creed was inadequate, and on the other

[1] The expression of Athanasius (*De Syn.* 1) that he had seen and accurately ascertained (ἑώρακα καὶ ἔγνων ἀκριβῶς) what took place at Rimini and Seleucia, has been understood to imply that he was actually present, at least at the latter council, in disguise. More probably, however, the expression only means that he had read the documents and acts of the councils. George the Alexandrian usurper, who had been driven out of Alexandria for his cruelties in 358, was present. If Athanasius visited Seleucia it must have been in the deepest secrecy.

hand Aetius and Eunomius, for whom it was too orthodox. But the creed of Rimini was a nullity. In saying that the Son was "*like*" the Father, it was neither Arian, nor orthodox, nor Semi-Arian, but a mere ambiguity. Of its subscribers some wrote to implore pardon of the confessors, while others in indignant shame shut themselves up in their own churches and refused to take any part in further controversies. Many would probably have shared in the cry of Ephraem Syrus, "Happy the sailor of the faith whom the storms of controversy have landed in the harbour of silence! Happy he who is mute when men discuss Thy generation, but ringing as a trumpet when they adore it. Happy they who know how difficult it is to understand, how sweet to praise Thee! Happy he who has not tasted the wisdom of the Greeks, nor lost the simplicity of the Apostles!"[1]

But at this point, having watched the heroic struggles of the Catholic party, and the infidel perplexities and intrigues of all who rejected the Nicene symbol, let us pause to say that nothing can be more frivolous and superficial than the attempt to represent the *whole* dispute as simply verbal. The question at stake was nothing less than the doctrine of the Incarnation in its fullest significance. Even Jeremy Taylor failed to see that the word *Homoousios* came to be of supreme importance because no other word could be discovered which absolutely excluded the impieties of Arianism. The tenacity, the sobriety, the endurance, the genius, the inflexibility, the lucid exposition of Athanasius rendered to the Church of Christ an inestimable service. So far from being the too-curious speculator and rash intruder into the secrets of the Deity, he was the one effectual opponent of speculations which sprang in great

[1] Jer. *Dial. c. Lucif.* 19.

measure from Plato and the Gnostics. "We are contending"—so he wrote to the Egyptian bishops from Trèves in 338—"for our all."[1]

And though the cause might have been lost had it not been for the wisdom, courage, and statesmanship of its chief defender, yet its strength lay also in the adhesion of the multitude, who were not to be sophisticated by specious dialectics. Though such emperors as Constantius and Valens were Arians, and though the Arians held a large number of bishoprics, including some of the most important metropolitan sees, the mass of the Christian laity was still sound in the faith. The Arian bishops did not dare to preach their exact belief, but concealed it under clouds of ingenious formulae. Even the forms of creed which they adopted were often only distinguishable from the Nicene by their determined avoidance of the one word *Homoousios*, which was a spear of Ithuriel in the hands of the orthodox for the detection of latent heresy. "The ears of the people," says Hilary, "were holier than the hearts of the priests."[2]

It is impossible to estimate too highly the indomitable hopefulness which Athanasius showed throughout this disastrous epoch. Even to a sanguine temperament it might well have seemed that everything was lost. Two Cappadocian heresiarchs in succession—Gregory and George—usurped his see; six heretics in succession—Eulalius, Euphronius, Flacillus, Stephanus, Leontius, Eudoxius—held the see of Antioch; Eusebius of Nicomedia was enthroned at Constantinople, and was succeeded by Macedonius, who denied the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, by the coarse Eudoxius, and by Demophilus of Beroea, who tempted Liberius to his fall.

[1] Fialon, *St. Athanase*, p. 50. See Athanas. *Decr. Nic.* 28, *Orat.* iii. 60.

[2] Hil. *c. Auxent.* 6.

Cyril was driven from the see of Jerusalem, and Hosius was tortured into the acceptance of an Arian creed. Liberius also apostatised, and, last of all, "he saw the almost universal shipwreck of the Catholic episcopate in the Council of Rimini."[1] And yet he neither yielded to flattery nor quailed before force, but

> "Still bore on and steered
> Uphillward."

"Only in Athanasius," says Hooker, "there was nothing observed throughout the course of that long tragedy, other than such as very well became a wise man to do and a righteous to suffer. So that this was the plain condition of those times: the whole world against Athanasius, and Athanasius against it; half a hundred of years spent in doubtful trial which of the two in the end would prevail—the side which has all, or else the part which had no friend but God and death, the one a defender of his innocence, the other a finisher of all his troubles."[2]

In 360 Eudoxius was transferred by the Arians to the see of Constantinople, and Meletius was made Bishop of Antioch. Finding that he was orthodox, the Arians secured his deposition and exile, and elected Euzoius, the friend of Arius. They were accordingly abandoned by the old congregation of Eustathius, and the schism of Antioch passed into an acuter phase.

In 361 Julian was saluted Emperor by the troops in Gaul, and Constantius, on his way to confront him, died, at the age of forty-five, on Nov. 4, at Mopsucrene, near Tarsus in Cilicia. He had been baptized on his deathbed by Euzoius, and was buried with great pomp in the Church of the Apostles. The Church

[1] Wordsworth, ii. 27. [2] *Eccl. Pol.* v. xlii. 5.

ceased henceforth to be troubled by the shifting currents of a will which Theodoret calls an Euripus of theology. Julian, who succeeded without dispute, had been for ten years a secret Pagan, and on Dec. 24 the Pagans of Alexandria — who hated George no less than the Christians, and who were indignant at his cruelties[1] — rose in tumult, beat and kicked him to death, burnt his ashes and flung them into the sea. Julian mildly reproved them, and annexed the valuable library of the Arian bishop to his own use.[2] To show his scornful indifference to all Christian quarrels, and not perhaps without a secret desire to exacerbate them, he published an edict that all the bishops who had been exiled in the previous reign might return home. Athanasius, amid the joy of the populace, returned on Feb. 22, 362, and seated himself once more on his episcopal throne. The usurpers Gregory and George had perished speedily by violent ends, though supported by imperial power; Athanasius, persecuted by bishops and emperors, held his office for nearly fifty years.

[1] Passing by a splendid temple, George had said, "How long shall this *sepulchre* stand?" There seems to be some ground for the notion that St. George of England is really, in part, a transmogrified representation of the Arian usurper; Alexandria is the Empress for whom he fought; he is "martyred" by the Pagan mob; and the magician his enemy, who is represented as a friend of Magnentius, is no other than Athanasius, the father of orthodoxy, who in course of time becomes the dragon! See Stanley, *Eastern Church*, p. 244.

[2] Julian, *Ep.* ix. x.

IX

Continued

LAST DAYS OF ATHANASIUS

"ὡς τοῦ περὶ παντὸς ὄντος ἡμῖν ἀγῶνος."—ATHAN. *ad Episc. Eg.* sec. 21

SECTION VII

THE return of the archbishop enabled him to carry out some great designs of ecclesiastical reorganisation. One of his first acts was to hold a council at the request of Eusebius of Vercellae, who, being enabled to return home by the edict of Julian, came to visit Alexandria. Lucifer came also, but unhappily, instead of stopping at Alexandria, only left two deacons to represent him, and hurried to Antioch, where he did an infinitude of mischief. Twenty bishops met together, and among them deputies from Paulinus of Antioch and Apollinaris of Laodicea. They discussed three questions.

1. How were the orthodox to deal with bishops and others who had lapsed during the Arian persecution?

Athanasius deeply yearned for peace and union, and it was decided to treat with mildness, and to re-admit to communion all who now frankly acknowledged their error and accepted the Nicene faith. Paulinus and his little church of Eustathian followers at Antioch were recommended to rejoin the community of Meletius.

Had it not been for Lucifer this advice would have been undoubtedly followed, and the Church would have been spared many grievous woes.

2. What view should be taken of the unfortunate word *hypostasis*, "substance"?

Some Christians talked of *three* hypostases in the Trinity, and were suspected as Arians; and some said there was only *one* hypostasis, and were suspected as Sabellians. Athanasius, "sensitively alive to the difference between misbelief and misapprehension," found that both parties meant the same thing. By three hypostases one party merely meant three *Persons* (*prosopa*), and by one hypostasis the other party only meant one *Essence* (*ousia*). The Nicene symbol used neither phrase, but *implied* that *hypostasis* was identical with *ousia*, and therefore might seem to sanction only the phrase "*one hypostasis*." But Athanasius was not going to allow "the two quarters of the world to be torn asunder by a difference of syllables."[1] He cared for truths and realities, not for words and sounds, and therefore held that both phrases were (in a true sense) admissible.

3. How were they to treat the dawning errors afterwards identified with the names of Nestorius and Apollinaris?

By some the Incarnation was made a separable visitation of manhood by the Word; on the other hand, the manhood of Christ was impaired by denying that He was "of *reasonable soul* and human flesh subsisting," and by saying that the Word *took the place of* the reasonable soul. The errors were not, however, as yet, sufficiently definite to have assumed the form of heresy, and mutual explanations were accepted as sufficient.

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxi.

The conclusions of the council were stated in a beautiful and charitable Synodal Letter "to those of Antioch," which was taken thither by Eusebius of Vercellae. It was in vain. Lucifer, fanatical in his orthodoxy and embittered by his sufferings, had already consecrated Paulinus as Bishop of Antioch—thus perpetuating the Antiochene schism for fifty years.

The new Emperor Julian had never known the best side of Christianity. He had only witnessed its fruits as exhibited in temporising bishops, who condoned the massacre of his relatives, and in sects who persecuted each other with intolerant fury.[1] From dogmatic dissensions about matters which were to him incomprehensible he turned with a sense of relief to the poems of Homer and the manliness of Stoic philosophy. As he only saw Christianity through the lurid fog of prejudice, so he saw Paganism, not in its naked hideousness, but refined, magnified, idealised in the Neo-Platonic philosophy. For 300 years Christianity had been persecuted, for fifty years it had been enthroned. Its triumph had been marked by the myriad-fold development of internecine schisms, until it seemed to Julian to be a dispute about words and names. He would not at first openly persecute it, for he professed admiration for tolerance and freedom; but he thought that by the exercise of a little cajolement and cunning he could so patronise the Pagans as to leave Christianity to perish of its inner discords. So he washed away the lustral water of baptism in the reeking horrors of a Tauroboly—in which the initiated were deluged with a bull's blood—offered unnumbered sacrifices, and passionately abjured his former faith. With amazing ignorance of the mean-

[1] Amm. Marcell. xxii. 5: "Nullas infestas hominibus bestias, ut sint sibi ferales plerique Christianorum expertus."

ing of his own times and the preceding centuries, he thought that he could bid the shadow go back on the sundial of history. He was soon rudely undeceived, and was proportionately irritated. His blows fell alike on heretics and the orthodox. Eusebius, the intriguing eunuch who had been the evil genius of Constantius, was beheaded. Taurus, who had managed the Council of Rimini, was impeached in his own consulship.[1] Mark of Arethusa, author of the "Dated Creed," who had saved the life of Julian when he was an infant, perished in one of the Pagan tumults which Julian so readily condoned. The Cappadocian George was murdered at Alexandria, and his death was left unpunished. On the other hand, Julian flattered the Novatians and the Donatists, and Aetius, and Photinus. Against Athanasius he was specially embittered. The Alexandrian Pagans told him that the worship of the gods could make no progress against the influence of the archbishop. Was this "mannikin," as Julian contemptuously called him, to frustrate all his religious and political plans for a universal reformation? Athanasius had not been at home for a year when, on Oct. 23, he was informed by the philosopher Pythiodorus that though the Emperor had allowed him to return he had not intended him to resume his episcopal duties, and that he was threatened not only with banishment but with something worse.[2] He instantly took boat up the Nile, assuring his weeping friends that this was but a passing cloud which would soon blow over. He was pursued, but receiving swift intimation of this, he

[1] Amm. Marcell. xxii. 3: "*Consulatu Tauri . . . inducto* sub *praeconibus Tauro.*"

[2] Julian, *Epp.* 6, 26, 51, in which he vents all his spleen on Athanasius, whom he calls πανοῦργος, τολμηρότατος, and ὁ θεοῖς ἐχθρός.

availed himself of a bend in the river and ordered his boat to turn and go down the Nile. They met the imperial officers, who shouted to them, "Where is Athanasius?" "Not very far off," answered the archbishop; and the two boats pursued their way in opposite directions.[1] He sailed towards Alexandria, hid himself in various places, wrote from Memphis his Festal Letter for 363, and escaped safely into the Thebaid.

It was his fourth exile, and was not unmarked by happy incidents. Near Hermopolis he was met on the banks of the Nile by a torchlit procession of numberless monks headed by Theodore of Tabenne. "Who are these," he asked in the words of Isaiah, "that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?"[2] So pleased was he with their life and demeanour that he exclaimed, "These men, devoted to humility and obedience, are fathers; not I." "Remember us in your prayers," said the Abbot Theodore. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!" answered the archbishop, deeply moved.

The exile was a brief one. One day at Antinoe, as he himself told the people in a sermon, he was in fear of arrest and death, when the Abbots Theodore and Pammon came to him and persuaded him to fly in Theodore's covered boat and hide himself at Tabenne. The monks of Tabenne began to tow the boat, while the archbishop poured out his soul in agitated prayer. "I am calmer," he said to Pammon, "in persecution than in peace. If I be killed——" At the word "killed" the two abbots smiled at each other. "Are

[1] Theodor. iii. 9.

[2] When Pachomius founded his rule it spread so rapidly that before his death, in 348, there were 1400 at Tabenne, and eight other monasteries, numbering 3000 in all. Early in the fifth century there were 50,000 monks. Macarius fixed his house in the desert of Scetis, and Ammon on the Nitrian mountains.

you smiling as though I feared death?" he asked. "No," said Theodore, "at this very hour your enemy Julian has been killed in his Persian war."

It was indeed so. Julian had been lured to his destruction by oracles which paltered with him in a double sense.[1] "The gods," says even Libanius, "made him the most brilliant promises. At last they totally renounced him. They lured him on as a fisherman lures a fish." On June 26, 363, before he had reached the age of thirty-two, he was slain by a chance arrow in his ill-omened expedition. We say "by a chance arrow," and such appears to have been the general belief. Callistus, one of his bodyguard, who wrote a poem on his death, said that he was killed by a demon, and Socrates approves of the suggestion.[2] But there were some, and among them Libanius, who attributed the death of Julian to the murderous treachery of one of his own Christian soldiers. There is no evidence for such a charge, nor should we have deemed it possible, had it not been for the remark of Sozomen, which deserves here to be gibbeted for its infamy. He does not think the charge incredible, and, if it was true, he thinks that the soldier might have been excused for his *courage* on behalf of God and religion![3] If a learned Christian historian could be guilty of approving of such a villainy, an ignorant Christian soldier might have been guilty of committing it.

His successor, Jovian, a mediocre but honest officer, was a friend of Athanasius, and wrote to him at once bidding him to resume his work. Athanasius was already

[1] He had received favourable answers from Delphi, Delos, and Dodona (Theodoret, iii. 16).

[2] Socr. iv. 21.

[3] Sozom. σχολῇ γε ἄν τις αὐτῷ μέμψαιτο διὰ θεὸν καὶ θρησκείαν ἣν ἐπῄνεσεν ἀνδρείῳ γενομένῳ.

in concealment in Alexandria, and he quietly reappeared on his episcopal chair as though nothing had happened. One of his first acts was to summon another council, and to write to Jovian, in answer to his request, a Synodal Letter in which he set forth the Nicene faith. Jovian, at Antioch, was besieged by religious controversialists, whose arguments he did not pretend to understand. "I detest quarrels," he said, "and love all those who know how to live in peace." He received Lucius, the Arian pretender to the see of Alexandria, with a rough soldier's joke. Lucius was a man of mean appearance, and when he was brought before the Emperor, Jovian asked him "whether he had come by sea or by land?" "By sea," he answered. "Heaven punish the sailors," said Jovian, "who missed so favourable an opportunity of throwing you into the sea." After such a reception of their bishop, the Arians were cautious not to trouble Jovian with any more delations.

On Sept. 5 Athanasius sailed to Antioch with his letter to Jovian. At that moment everything seemed to smile. Liberius had risen from his fall. The Churches were now in almost universal accord about the Nicene faith. At Antioch he wrote his Festal Letter for 364, and returned to Alexandria on Feb. 19, a few days before Jovian ended his eight months' reign at the age of thirty-two. The unfortunate Emperor was smothered by the fumes of a charcoal brazier in his bedroom, and died at Dadasthenes on the borders of Galatia. His successor, Valentinian I., though "rude without vigour and feeble without mildness," was happily tolerant by policy; but he handed over the government of the East to his brother Valens, who was a zealous Arian.[1] At first

[1] It was in a law of Valentinian I. that the heathen (*Heiden*, dwellers

Athanasius was not disturbed, and about this time he may have written, if he ever wrote at all, a *Life of Antony*.[1] But in 367 Valens ordered the banishment anew of all those bishops whom Constantius had banished, and whom Julian had permitted to return. Unwilling to disturb the peace of the city and the Empire, Athanasius, for the fifth time, went into exile. His flight was almost too late, for on Oct. 5 the praefect broke into the Church of St. Dionysius, in the precincts of which he had been living, and searched it from roof to basement in vain. The archbishop hid himself in his father's tomb, or, according to another story, in a country house. But, four months later, Valens revoked his edict. The imperial notary, Brasidas, was guided to the hiding-place of Athanasius, and, with a great multitude of his jubilant people, led him back once more on Feb. 1, 366. In 367 Lucius, the rival bishop of the Arians, had to be removed from Alexandria because his life was endangered by the resentment which his presence caused.

After this time the life of Athanasius was spent in peace, unmarked during its last six years by any of the troubles and persecutions in which the greater part of it had been passed. His Festal Letter for 367 is memorable for its list of the New Testament Scriptures, "the fountain of salvation," which accords precisely with our own. In this letter he draws much the same distinction

on *heaths*) were first called *pagani*, "villagers" (*Cod. Theodos.* xvi. 2, 18), because the inhabitants of towns were now nearly all nominal Christians. Hitherto the heathen had been called *gentes, gentiles*, etc.

[1] Besides all its other effects, this life was instrumental in no small degree in the conversion of Augustine. But its influence does not in the least prove that it was not a forgery. Early as it became known, it is certainly *very* largely interpolated, and elsewhere (*Cont. Rev.* Nov. 1887) I have collected the reasons for thinking that it is (1) spurious, and (2) a romance.

between non-canonical and canonical Scriptures as that which is drawn in our sixth Article.[1] He also wrote a treatise, which is believed to be genuine, at least in the main, *On the Incarnation.* In 369 he must have felt how strong was the Nicene reaction when he received from Pope Damasus and a Roman council their excommunication of Ursacius and Valens, and subsequently (by his own suggestion) of Auxentius, the Arian Bishop of Milan. In this year he also rebuilt the Caesarean church, and laid the foundation of another, which was named after himself. We shall see in the life of Basil the cordial relations which subsisted between Athanasius and the Bishop of Caesarea. Basil appealed to his judgment as the acknowledged head of the Christian Church in influence and distinction, and he in his turn warmly defended Basil from imputations of heresy. They never met, but they corresponded with each other, and remained firm friends, though the inability of Basil to re-establish kindly relations between Athanasius and Meletius caused the failure of his endeavour to put an end to the schism of Antioch. The personal element of the misunderstanding between the Bishops of Antioch and Alexandria was perhaps inevitable. Meletius felt, not unnaturally, indignant at the consecration of Paulinus, which, though it was the sole work of Lucifer, seemed to be at least acquiesced in by Athanasius; and Athanasius had always felt closely drawn to the congregation of which Paulinus was the head, and with whom he had communicated when an Arian held the see. To the end of his days Athanasius lost no opportunity to support and to define the simple creed of Nice against the various speculations and heresies which continued to ferment in the minds of

[1] Westcott, *On the Canon*, pp. 448, 554.

Marcellus, Apollinaris, and other contemporaries. Yet to the men themselves he was gentle and generous. Though he wrote against the errors of Apollinaris, who was his old friend, he does not mention his name in the two books; and while he went to the utmost extreme in trying to believe the orthodoxy of Marcellus, yet, when asked what he thought of his theology, his whole features broadened into a significant smile. In his letters to Adelphius, Maximus, and Epictetus he deals with various errors regarding the Deity and Humanity of Christ.

Amid these labours old age came upon him. His hair—once auburn—now grew white with the snows of so many winters. He had been bishop for forty-six years, and in a few months more the forty-seventh year of his episcopate would have been completed. But on May 2, 373, after consecrating his friend and presbyter Peter as his successor, he died peacefully in his own house. He had outlived many of his enemies, and none of the survivors were powerful enough to injure him. He was now honoured by all in spite of the mountain-loads of infamous falsehoods which the malice of controversy had heaped upon his name. He died in full possession of the episcopal dignity, from which he had been five times driven into exile—by Constantine, twice by Constantius, by Julian, and by Valens. Had he lived but a few years longer he would have rejoiced in the vigorous orthodoxy of Theodosius, and in the decrees of the Second Œcumenical Council—the Council of Constantinople—which in 381 pronounced its emphatic ratification of the watchword and the creed in defence of which he had expended the high genius and indomitable energy of his truly heroic life.

From the days when Gregory of Nazianzus pro-

nounced upon his memory that gorgeous panegyric which is still extant,[1] and Basil appealed to him as "the Samuel of the Church," and compared him to the Pharos of his city looking down with calm dominance over the wreck-strewn waves,[2] Athanasius has received the ungrudging admiration not only of the Church but of the world. Even Gibbon was fascinated by the spell of his ascendency. Cosmas said of him, "Whenever thou findest a book of Athanasius, if thou hast no paper write it on thy clothes."[3] Erasmus puts him before all the Fathers for pure and simple eloquence. Hooker has eulogised him in one of his noblest and stateliest passages. Cardinal Newman has spoken of him in verse as

> "Royal-hearted Athanase
> With Paul's own mantle blest,"

and in prose as "a principal instrument, after the Apostles, by which the sacred truths of Christianity have been conveyed and secured to the world."

His was a deeply religious mind. Faith inspired and brightened his whole career. "He was," says De Broglie, "inflamed from youth upwards with the passion that makes saints—the love of Jesus Christ." The prevailing attribute of his intellect was versatility, of his conduct moderation, of his character courage, of his religion faithfulness. He was, as Gregory says, manifold in his methods, single in his aims. His energy roused the sluggish, and his balanced wisdom repressed the extravagant. To error he was not only as the sword but also as the winnowing fan, and his influence was not only like the blows of the conqueror, but also like the breath of the quickening spirit.[4] He mingled meekness

[1] *Orat.* xxi. [2] Basil, *Ep.* 82. [3] *Pratum spirituale*, xl.
[4] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxi.

with power, and his spirit was as humble as his temper was royal. His biography is his best panegyric. Firm amid incessant opposition, dauntless amid innumerable dangers, cheerful in spite of long-continued afflictions, uncowed by storms of calumny, of which any single outburst would have been sufficient to crush a smaller man, peaceful amid the enmities of hostile parties, affectionate though he breathed the atmosphere of hatred — many-sided, conciliatory, prudent, never suffering his enthusiasm to be quenched by disappointments, never losing his faith in humanity though he was daily confronted with the aspect of its meanest failings, never losing his faith in God though again and again the cause which he regarded as sacred seemed to be hopelessly lost—Athanasius presents an example as pure and noble as any which the Church of God has ever seen since Paul was led forth from his Roman dungeon to his martyr-death. He was *τοῖς μὲν παίουσιν ἀδάμας τοῖς δὲ στασιάζουσι μαγνῆτις*—adamant to smiters, a loadstone to the dissentient—"the one found him no more apt to yield than a rock of marble, the other by a singular meekness and a generous patience he drew over to himself."[1]

[1] Cave.

X

ST. HILARY OF POICTIERS[1]

"Pictavis residens, quâ sanctus Hilarius olim
Natus in urbe fuit, notus in orbe Pater."—FORTUNATUS.

ST. HILARY OF POICTIERS, like St. Ambrose and St. Cyprian, leaves on our minds the impression of a gracious and noble personality. He was a man born to lead, and born to be loved. St. Jerome compares him to a cedar of Libanus supporting the Temple of God.[2] The comparison is just. When few of the leading bishops remained true to the Nicene faith, when the prelates of Antioch, Constantinople, and many other of the greatest sees shared the views of the Eusebians, or had

[1] The best edition of Hilary's works is the Benedictine by Dom Constant, Paris, 1693 (which is the one to which references are made in the following pages): References in Jerome, *De Vir. ill.* 100, *Epp.* vi. vii. xiii. lxxxiii. lxxxix. cxli. cxlvii., the *Chronicon*, etc., and in other Latin Fathers. *Vita Sti. Hilarii*, a servo suo Fortunato Presbytero; Sulpicius Severus, *Hist. Sacr.* ii. 55; *Vita B. Martini*, 4, 5; *Vita S. Hilarii Pictavensis* in the Benedictine edition (Peter Constant), 1693; *Acts of Councils from* A.D. 353-367 (Labbé, i. 697-747); Du Pin, *Nouv. Bibl.* ii. 79-98; Cave, *Hist. Lit.* i. 213, Basle, 1741; Baronius, *Ann. Eccl.* iii. iv. (ed. Col. 1624); sub. A.D. 355-360, 362, 369. Excursus in Möhler's *Athanasius der Grosse;* Viehhauser, *Hilarius Pictavensis geschildert in seinem Kampfe gegen d. Arianismus*, Klagenfurt, 1860; Bishop Reinkens, *Hilarius von Poitiers Eine Monographie*, Schaffhausen, 1864.

[2] *Comment. in* Jer. *lib.* xvii. c. 60, v. 13 (quoted by Bishop Reinkens, to whose beautiful monograph I must here, once for all, make a chief general acknowledgment of my indebtedness).

reluctantly succumbed to the threats and blandishments of Constantius; when there was scarcely one Asiatic prelate who was not at least a Semi-Arian; when even the holy Hosius of Cordova, Father of Bishops and President of the Council of Nice, and Liberius, the Bishop of Rome, had been crushed into brief apostasy by cruel exile, the whole Church might, humanly speaking, have lapsed into heresy but for the indomitable courage and serene wisdom of two great men—Athanasius in the East, Hilary in the West. Hilary has nobly earned the name of "the Athanasius of Gaul."

Hilary was born at Pictavi in Aquitania, now Poictiers, the capital of the department of Vienne. The exact date of his birth is uncertain, but it must have been about A.D. 315, for in 360 he declared in his appeal to Constantius that he would willingly abandon his priestly rank and grow gray as a lay penitent if he had ever done anything unworthy of a bishop's sanctity or even of a layman's uprightness.[1]

No province had more entirely absorbed the spirit of Roman civilisation than Aquitania. It had become so thoroughly Italianised as almost to despise the barbarous name of Gaul.[2] In the dialogue on St. Martin of Tours by Sulpicius Severus, the Gaul who is requested to tell the story of the saint's life apologises for a rudeness of speech which he fears cannot but offend auditors so polished as the Aquitanians. The eloquence of the Aquitanians was the astonishment and delight of Jerome;[3] the beauty and fertility of their district—its vines and orchards, and blossoming meadows, and pleasant streams—made it seem like a new Paradise to Salvian of Marseilles.[4]

[1] *Ad Constant.* ii. 2. [2] Plin. *H. N.* iii. 31.

[3] Reinkens, p. 5, refers to Jac. Bernay's *Ueber die Chronik des Sulp. Severus* (Berlin, 1861). [4] Salv. *De Gubern. Dei*, vii.

In this delightful land Hilary was born of wealthy and distinguished parents, and was educated in the schools of his native town, which at that time were scarcely to be surpassed in excellence. From Poictiers he probably went to Bordeaux (Burdigala) to complete his grammatical and rhetorical training in the city of the poet Ausonius. Jerome tells us that he chose Quintilian as his pattern for the formation of a literary style, and it is clear that he had the advantage of a thorough education.[1]

In one of his hymns he called the Gauls "*indociles*," but doubtless his mastery of their language would help him in dealing with them.[2]

Latin was practically his native language, and he was probably acquainted with the vernacular Celtic and Gallic, which was prevalent among the poorer inhabitants.[3] But, besides this, he did not, like Augustine, shrink from the difficult task of mastering Greek. His knowledge of that great language stood him in good stead. It enabled him to take a personal part in the discussions of the Synod of Seleucia, and also to introduce the western world to a wider knowledge of the writings of Origen by translating into Latin his *Commentary on the Book of Job*.[4] He rejoiced especially in his knowledge of Greek, because he recognised the profound importance of that tongue as a vehicle of Divine revelation. Most gladly would he have super-

[1] Jer. *Ep.* lxxxiii. Aug. *De Doctr. Christ.* ii. 40: "Nonne respicimus quanto auro et argento et veste suffarcinatus exierit de Ægypto . . Hilarius."

[2] Jer. *Comm. in Gal.* lib. 2, *praef.* [3] See Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* i. 20.

[4] Jerome says that he required in the translation of Greek the assistance of Heliodorus, a friendly presbyter (*Ep.* 34, sec. 5, *ad Marcellam*). He felt the difficulty of translating into Latin the nice distinctions of Greek theology, *De Synod.* 9. But he must have had more than the *quaedam aurula* of Greek which Jerome assigns to him.

added the knowledge of Hebrew, which would have saved him from being dependent on accidental explanations.[1] But in those days the attainment of Hebrew was a matter of almost insuperable difficulty even in the East. That difficulty had been overcome by the heroic determination of Origen and Jerome, who were able, though not without expense and danger, to secure the help of Jewish teachers. In the West it was practically impossible to find the requisite assistance.

His parents were heathen, and it is nearly certain that he did not embrace Christianity till he was of mature age. He seems, however, to have escaped all the baser forms of that "corruption which is in the world through lust,"—the sins which left their taint on the youthful soul of St. Augustine, and from which even St. Cyprian did not wholly escape. There are some of whom the grace of God takes early hold, and in whose character "reason and religion run together like warp and woof" to weave the web of an exemplary life. Such an one was Hilary. He married, probably at an early age, and had one daughter, Abra, whom he loved with most tender affection. The home of Hilary seems to have been a scene of perfect happiness and peace.

The scathelessness with which he passed through the fires of heathen civilisation is all the more remarkable, because in Aquitania there was every element of the worldly life which is usually powerful to attract and to corrupt. The provincials of his native land were devoted to the impure theatrical representations and the ruthless games of the amphitheatre which proved so fatal to many of those who were afterwards won to Christianity. From various allusions in Hilary's *Com-*

[1] *In Ps. cxlii.* 1: "Psalmi superscriptio nulla esse secundum Hebraeos *videtur*, id enim ab his qui utrâque linguâ eruditi sunt *traditur*."

mentary on the Psalms we learn that they were specially addicted to the pride of life, and delighted in costly garments broidered with gold and jewels, in sumptuous houses, in splendid horses and equipages. From Salvian[1] we learn that vice was, as it so often is, the concomitant of wealth and luxury. "What state," he asks, "among the Aquitanians was not in its wealthiest and noblest region a house of lust? Which of the powerful and wealthy did not live in the mire of lust? Who did not plunge himself in the abyss of that most sordid vileness? Who was faithful to his wife? I ask the wise what could the families be, when the fathers of families were such as I describe?" "Nowhere," he says, "was pleasure more shameless, nowhere was life more contaminated, nowhere was discipline more corrupt."

From all this evil Hilary turned away with the fine and haughty fastidiousness of a soul naturally Christian. He was kept from it by the unseen grace of God which taught him the dignity of self-respect, "the inner reverence of a man for his own person." A vicious life seemed to him to be not life but death.[2] Nor could he find any satisfaction in the fairer side of the life of his Heathen contemporaries; in their poetry, their literature, their eloquence, their philosophy. He could gain no real help from the then fashionable Neo-Platonism with its vague and dim abstractions, and what he calls "the tortuous investigations of a subtle philosophy."[3] His bent of mind was absolutely practical. From the Epicureans he turned with contempt, for their ideal seemed to him the ideal of the beasts that perish. From the Sceptics he recoiled with abhorrence, for his soul was athirst for God. "My mind," he says, "was hastening

[1] *De Gubern. Dei*, i. 132-135. [2] *In Ps. cxviii.* 1.
[3] *De Trin.* xii. 19.

not only to do those things which not to have done would be full of shame and pain, but to learn to know the God and Father of this great boon, to Whom it should wholly devote itself, by Whose service it should esteem itself ennobled. To the understanding or ascertaining, then, of Him my mind was being kindled with most burning zeal." Specially hateful therefore to Hilary was the atheism professed by philosophers like Diagoras of Melos and Theodorus of Cyrene; and the atomistic theory of men like Leucippus and Democritus. He was eager to apprehend God, and was being apprehended of Him.

In the midst of these enquiries Hilary was led by some friend to study the Old Testament Scriptures, and in the great "*I am that I am*" he found the satisfaction of his soul's need. In reading Isaiah and the Psalms he learnt to know the Creator of the world, and from the beauty of things seen to lean on God as the source of all beauty and all holiness. The lessons which he had so far learnt were richly supplemented when he gradually passed on to the Gospel of St. John. There at last, in the revelation of the Word who became flesh, he found all that he desired, all and more than all for which he had ever hoped. He found Christ. He became a Christian. He was baptized. The full account of the mental processes which led to his conversion is given by himself, in a tone of the deepest thankfulness, in the opening chapters of his work *On the Trinity*.[1] As Augustine says of him, he left the Egypt of heathendom laden with the gold and silver and garments of the Egyptians; in other words, with the ripest classical and philosophic culture which a heathen education could bestow upon him in preparation for a Christian walk.

As a Christian layman he lived a most pure and

[1] *De Trin.* i. 1-14.

blameless life. In later days he tempered with greater urbanity the stern conduct towards heretics and Jews which he had first supposed to be required by theological inflexibility. He endeavoured "to become all things to all men."[1] The charm of his bearing did not shelter him from attack; but, persecuted and hated with all the deadly virulence of theological malice, he could yet challenge his unscrupulous opponents to prove that he had ever been guilty of a base or ignoble deed.[2] He attended to the Christian training of his wife and daughter, devoted himself to works of charity and mercy, and lived a life of the severest simplicity. Such a man —so holy, so noble, so learned, so distinguished—could not be overlooked. When the Bishop of Poictiers died, the voice of the people called him to the episcopate, as it called Ambrose, and Cyprian, and Martin of Tours. A *man* was needed, and the people can distinguish a man when they see him. At what date he was elected we do not know. It was probably about A.D. 353, but our only indication is his remark that in A.D. 355 he had been a bishop "for some little time."[3] Whether he adopted the ascetic view of marriage after his consecration is an uncertain point. The practice of the virtual separation of bishops from their wives was beginning to be required, not, indeed, by ecclesiastical law, but by popular opinion. But Socrates expressly tells us that many bishops did not yield to the tendency of the day.[4]

By the time that he was chosen to preside over the Church of Poictiers he had obtained a firm grasp of the leading truths of Christian theology, and especially of the nature and mission of the Saviour, although he tells us that he had been already for some time a bishop

[1] See Fortunatus, i. 3.
[2] *Ad Const.* ii. 2.
[3] *De Syn.* 91, "aliquantisper."
[4] Socr. vi. 22.

before he was even aware of the existence of the Nicene Creed, in defence of which he was destined to suffer and to toil so long.[1]

In many passages of his writings he has alluded to his ideal of the life of a bishop as consisting in innocence of conduct, and the preaching of the Gospel to all, with the best aids of human knowledge and divine grace, without money and without price[2]—"*ut et vita ejus ornetur docendo, et doctrina vivendo.*"[3] As the word of God is a lamp to each of us, so (he thought) the bishop should be a lamp to the whole body, the Church. He should be a student of the Scriptures, that he might enlighten his people respecting their true and deep significance, and his teaching should derive grace and power from the double beauty of blamelessness and knowledge. In all his efforts he should unite the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. Amid the strife of tongues, or when the wolves of heresy were howling round him, he should keep his eye fixed upon the glory of God, and look only to heaven for his reward.[4]

It was in the pursuit of such ends that he rendered to the Church his first most memorable service. It is his conspicuous glory that he was the earliest to supply the Western Church in any adequate measure with any real and continuous commentary on a book of the New Testament. Tertullian, Cyprian, and Novatian had indeed made large use of the Holy Scriptures, and had

[1] The fact is curious, and perhaps the expression is not to be taken quite literally, but he says (*De Syn.* 91), "Fidem Nicaenam *nunquam nisi exsulaturus* audivi."

[2] *In Matt. x.* 4: "*Ministratio gratuita muneris gratuiti.*"

[3] *De Trin.* viii. 1, 2; xii. 20.

[4] See *De Trin.* l. c.; *in Matt. xxvii.* 1, etc. These and other passages are collected by Bishop Reinkens, pp. 50-56.

commented on particular passages, as, for instance, on the Lord's Prayer. Rhaeticius, Bishop of the Ædui, had written on the Canticles, and Fortunatus, Bishop of Aquileia, had composed a brief and unimportant commentary on the Four Gospels; but Jerome finds only two Latin writers deserving of distinguished mention as Latin exegetes, namely Victorinus of Pettau and Hilary. In scientific skill he ranks them as equals, but Victorinus was a Greek, and his Latin style was naturally inferior to that of the polished Aquitanian whom Jerome calls "a Rhodanus of Latin eloquence."[1]

Hilary, filled with the laudable design of supplying a felt need in the Western Church, chose the Gospel of St. Matthew as the subject of his first commentary. His theoretic views as a commentator were wide. When he came to argue against the Arians he laid down the clear rule that truth must be derived *from* Scripture, not argued *into* it; that what we must consider is not the mere letter, but the essential meaning which it conveys; that the context and the conditions of each statement must be considered; that the meaning of abstruse and difficult passages should be explained by that of those which are easier and simpler; that the true knowledge of Scripture consists in the spirit, not in the letter; and that the secret of understanding it aright is to be found not in disobedience, but in love.[2] In his actual commentary these rules avail him but little. An admirer of the writings of Origen, he, like so many of the Fathers, introduced a mass of allegory which is absolutely valueless for any purpose of serious interpretation. Of the sounder methods and more scientific studies which

[1] *Praef. in lib.* 2, *Comm. in Gal.*

[2] *De Trin.* iv. 14, vi. 41, vii. 33, xi. 7, 22-31; *ad Const.* ii. 7; *in Matt. v.* 14, *x.* 1. See Reinkens, pp. 63, 64.

the martyr Lucian had already inaugurated in the school of Antioch he knew nothing, or at any rate he made no practical use of them. Admirable in his moral insight and religious orthodoxy, he cannot be ranked high as a real expositor. Masses of his interpretations have no value apart from the general truths which they express. They spring rather from speculative ingenuity than from real study. They are in no sense explanations of—in most instances they have not the least real connection with—the passages which they profess to interpret. When in the *Catena Patrum* we see any specimen of allegorising which is specially irrelevant, we too often read beneath it the name of Hilary. The so-called "mystic significance" is only valuable for the spiritual teaching of which it may be made the inappropriate channel. In early ages it was sincerely adopted, and it had its true function; but in these days to pass it off as though it were demonstrative or exegetical is a wrong to the majesty of truth.

One happy event of his early episcopate was the friendship which he formed with the youthful St. Martin. We shall read in the Life of that saint how he received from the hands of Hilary his ordination as an exorcist. But the peaceful days of episcopal activity, during which Hilary instructed his diocese and composed his *Commentary on St. Matthew*, came speedily to a close. About A.D. 355 he was drawn into the violent whirlpool of the Arian controversy.

It may serve to guide the reader among the intricacies of theological discussions which characterise the age, if he will here consult the brief *résumé* of the state of parties, the sequence of councils, and the publi-

cations of creeds, which I have given in the note at the end of this chapter.

Constantine the Great had died on May 22, A.D. 337. Of his three sons the eldest, Constantine II., perished in less than three years (March A.D. 340) in civil war with his brother Constans. Ten years later, in Feb. A.D. 350, Constans was murdered by his own soldiers. In Dec. 350 Constantius deposed the usurper Vetranio. On Sept. 28, 351, his generals defeated the other usurper Magnentius in the battle of Mursa, and on Aug. 10, 353, in the bloody battle of Mount Seleucus, after which Magnentius fell on his own sword. Constantius then found himself the lord of the civilised world.

He used his victory in a mean and tyrannic manner. Entirely devoid of magnanimity, and an incessant prey to suspicion, he let loose a vile army of spies and informers over his afflicted Empire. Confiscations, banishments, tortures, executions, were inflicted on hundreds of victims. In Britain the upright and honourable Martin was not severe enough to please him, and had to take refuge in suicide, while the Spaniard Paul won his entire confidence by unscrupulous cruelties, which won for him among the people the nickname of "*The Chain.*" Nor was Constantius content with summary retribution. Like Tiberius, he liked to see his victims overwhelmed with the long agony of uncertainty and terror before he suffered the final doom to fall. And yet he had a very special desire to be glorified as "a just and merciful Emperor"!

We see in his career yet one more illustration of the insane pride which so often assails those who have climbed to "the dread summits of Caesarian power." He began to regard himself as a little god on earth. He was not wholly destitute of personal advantages. Though

his complexion was dark, he had inherited the fair hair and blue eyes of his father; though his legs were short and bowed, his general figure was stalwart. He excelled in military exercises, and looked majestic on horseback. Nothing pleased him better than to assume the awful immobility of an idol, as he sat in the mid-splendour of his court, or between the gold-embroidered banners on his triumphal chariot. He would not move or cough, lest the impression of his divinity should be weakened. His life was free from personal irregularities; and he was deeply impressed with so religious a sense of his own grandeur that he always spoke of his own actions as though they were the will of God, and described his motives as being due to immediate and divine guidance. No titles were too extravagant to shock the delirium of his self-importance.[1] He was "the Conqueror by land and sea," the "Semper Augustus." He was addressed as "Oh most beatified Lord Augustus," "Lord of the whole world," "Your holiness," "Your eternity." The epithet "sacred" was applied to everything connected with his family or his person. And yet this "all-holiest Augustus," this stupendous autocrat, had a mind hardly superior to that of a vestryman, and was incessantly tormented with envy and suspicion. He was in reality a blind instrument to glut the avarice and further the views of abler men than himself. He was fooled to the top of his bent by sly eunuchs and intriguing priests during his lifetime, and so little has the world been deceived by his pretensions that he is despised alike by the Pagan Ammianus and the Catholic Döllinger, alike by the orthodox Socrates and the sceptical Gibbon.[2]

[1] See Amm. Marc. xxi. 16, and *passim*.
[2] See Dr. Cazenove, *St. Hilary*, p. 70.

He spoiled temples and persecuted Paganism, and in return for these services he claimed the right to interfere in the affairs of religion. His Arianising tendencies had been confirmed by his marriage with Eusebia, a decided Arian, and by the influence of Valens over him, which had been strengthened by the detestable fraud of the bishop in pretending to have received from a divine intimation the news of the victory at Mursa, which he had really derived from secret intelligence. Constantius was praying in a church in a paroxysm of anxiety when the bishop assured him, by way of revelation, that Magnentius was defeated. Henceforth the easily-duped Emperor regarded the Arian intriguer as a saint who had communications from heaven. Himself a heretic, he considered it as his Divine mission to suppress heresy; if possible by cajolery, if not by violence. A mere catechumen, he yet arrogated to himself the oracular pomposity of a professional theologian; controlled from his own palace an assembly of three hundred venerable bishops; and when reminded that his will was contrary to a particular canon, haughtily replied, "A canon is what I choose." Under him, if there had been none to withstand his dogged persistence, "the heresy of Valens and Ursacius would have become the Church's faith, and the caprice of a tyrant the Church's law."

But though he was as deeply convinced as James of "The right divine of kings to govern wrong"; though he was as inflexible in his opinions as George III., and claimed as absolute a right to interfere with the convictions of his subjects as Henry VIII.; he found, even at Milan and in his own audience-chamber, that there were wills which he could not bend and beliefs which he could not shake. If there were some mere court bishops like

Ursacius and Valens, who, for their own ends, were not ashamed to become the tools and co-plotters of eunuchs, there were also bishops like Eusebius of Vercelli, Lucifer of Cagliari, and Dionysius of Milan, who preferred the poverty and misery of exile in places like Scythopolis and Germanicia to the condemnation of the innocent Athanasius or the acceptance of an Arian creed.

Hilary had not been present at the Council of Milan (A.D. 355), but he soon saw the terrible results. The Arian Auxentius was made Bishop of Milan. Liberius, secretly arrested in Rome, was banished to Beroea, and Felix thrust into his place. Hosius, his head white with the snows of a hundred winters, was gradually beaten, tortured, and terrified into submission at Sirmium. The times were very perilous, and Hilary was so deeply impressed with the duty of humility[1] that he could not, without deep reluctance, thrust himself into a leading position against those who were in authority. Yet he did not hesitate for a moment to perform his painful and dangerous duty. He felt that "humility ought never to lack firmness," and that "the liberty of God should be preserved by us amid that service which we owe to all, lest we should either be terrified before the assaults of the powerful or yield to the dictations of the ill-disposed."[2] He felt that ease and external peace were not to be expected by the faithful Christian amid the malice of the world, and that lowliness of heart must not be dissevered from loftiness of spirit.[3] His name was already famous throughout the Western world,[4] and he could not shrink from the duty assigned to him by the providence of God.

Already, in A.D. 353, the orthodox bishops of Gaul had

[1] *In Ps. cxviii. Lit.* 20; *Lit.* 14, sec. 10; *Lit.* 20, sec. 1, cxxx. 1.
[2] *In Ps. xiv.* 12. [3] *In Ps. cxxviii.* 1, *cxxx.* 4. [4] Jer. *Ep.* cxli.

received a severe shock from the Synod of Arles. In A.D. 353 Arelate (Arles) was styled by Ausonius "the little Rome of Gaul."[1] Its bishop, Saturninus, was the metropolitan of all the Gallic bishops and the seven provinces, and he therefore held a position of the highest influence and importance. Unhappily he had been won over to the Arian party during the visit of Constantius to Arles in the autumn of A.D. 353. If Hilary's picture of him be accepted—and Hilary is usually fair even to his opponents—he was a man of no character.[2] Intellectually insignificant and spiritually commonplace, he was nevertheless the eager fugleman of parties. Untruthful, hypocritical, ambitious, and a flatterer, he was exactly the sort of man whom such persons as Valens and Ursacius would be likely to entangle in their toils, and to make him a ready agent for the heretical aims and unscrupulous proceedings of the Emperor. He summoned a synod at Arles, and this was the synod which had been marked by the disastrous adhesion of the two Papal legates,[3] and by the banishment into Phrygia of the faithful Bishop Paulinus of Trèves.

Hilary had long ago seen the approaching danger, and there were many influences which might have tempted another man to silence. Constantius, by his subterranean ways and dogged ruthlessness, had inspired universal terror. Saturninus occupied a position indefinitely more important than the humble bishopric of Poictiers. Hilary was admonished; he was threatened. In the path of subservience lay quiet, home, enjoyment,

[1] Auson. *De clar. urb.* viii.; Gallula Roma, Arelas.

[2] Sulp. Severus agrees with Hilary; *Chron.* ii. 56.

[3] Bishops Vincent and Marcellus. Hilary alludes to this synod in his *ad Const.* i. 8, "collecta jam illic *malignantium* synodo"; *c. Const.* 11, *Fragm.* v. 5, vi. 3. This is, I suppose, one of the earliest instances of the word "malignants." Comp. *Vulg.* Ps. lxxxiii. 3.

wealth, imperial favour; in the path of resistance lay peril, exile, hatred, perhaps death. He was not asked to approve; he was only bidden to be silent. But he refused to be silent. Such tolerance, he thought, would be unrighteousness; such silence would be guilt. Let the unrighteous combine, and the heretical conspire; he, at all costs, would be faithful to the name of the Lord his God.[1]

But by A.D. 355 things had become much worse. Constantius had sent forth into the Church a commission of notaries and creatures of the court who were enjoined, with the odious assistance of Ursacius and Valens, to coerce all refractory bishops into a condemnation of Athanasius and an acceptance of the imperial Arianism. "Subscribe, or vacate your sees," was the only choice allowed them. They, and all who supported them, were to be punished with confiscations, imprisonment, insults, and expulsion. Orthodox cities witnessed with horror and indignation the deplorable spectacle of faithful bishops led through their streets in chains to exile; and the court bishops and eunuchs, like the Emperor himself, often acted on secret information which was unknown even to the accused. It was high time to act. "Let us lay down our lives for the sheep," wrote Hilary to the Emperor, "since thieves have entered in, and the raging lion stalks around. With these words let us go forth to martyrdom, since the Angel of Satan has transformed himself into an Angel of Light."[2] Nothing could have been more decisive than the step he took. In defiance of the Emperor and of his ecclesiastical superior, and in despite of spies, agents, courtiers, and imperial officers, he managed to communicate with many of the Gallic bishops, and in their name drew up a decree,

[1] *Fragm.* i. 3. [2] In *Const.* i. 1.

in which they severed themselves from all communion with Saturninus, Valens, Ursacius, and with all their adherents who did not seize this opportunity to abandon the Arian clique. It was but two years since he had been promoted to be a bishop from the position of a layman, and yet he did not hesitate to forge and to wield this thunderbolt against all that was mightiest in Church and State.[1]

Saturninus was not the man to leave such a defiance unnoticed. He endeavoured to poison the mind of Constantius against Hilary, both by insinuations of immorality and charges of political disloyalty. In 355 Julian had been recalled from Athens, and declared Caesar. The state of Gaul was disturbed. The German tribes of the Rhine had burst over the unhappy province with their murderous and plundering hordes. Sylvanus had been sent to suppress them, and had fallen a victim to the jealousy of the Emperor, stimulated by forged letters. Driven into rebellion by indignation, he had assumed the purple and been assassinated in twenty-eight days. Under such circumstances the Emperor was easily induced to look with suspicion on any man of prominence. Hilary, in self-defence, addressed to him his first letter (A.D. 356). He had not yet learned the depths of baseness of which Constantius was capable, and he addressed him with respect. It was an appeal for toleration, and for the protection of Catholics from the persecution of the Arians. Hilary assured the Emperor that all disturbances in Gaul were at an end. He entreated him to restore the exiled bishops to their sees; assured him (as some Huguenot might have assured Louis XIV, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes)

[1] Facundus of Hermiane says that the decree was actually written by Hilary, *Ep. ad Mocian.*

that he was injuring himself by banishing his most trustworthy subjects; and once more used the argument of the early Apologists, that "God has no need of an unwilling allegiance, and will have no compulsory confession of faith."[1]

If Constantius read the letter, neither he nor his eunuchs would like its tone of manly independence. In Dec. 355 he sent Julian to regulate the fortunes of Gaul, which, between barbarian incursions and imperial jealousies, had been reduced to a deplorable condition. Before Julian could take any active measures for the defence of the province, he had to reorganise all its institutions. He could have had but little time or inclination to attend to questions of theology, and he probably disbelieved the political charges which Saturninus whispered against Hilary. The Bishop of Arles ventured, however, in the spring of 356, to summon a synod of bishops at Biterrae (Beziers) in Narbonne, as though by the command of Julian. Outside the seven provinces there were few Gallic bishops present. Hilary was compelled to attend, and wished to open the question of doctrine. But he was refused a hearing. The Arianising bishops were afraid of discussion, and only wished to deal with the personal question. The proceedings were hurried and tumultuous, and Julian—who probably admired Hilary as an orator, if he secretly despised him as a Christian—was as yet too uninfluential, and in too dangerous a position, to withstand the majority. He had the fate of his brother Gallus before his eyes. He knew that the Argus-eyes of suspicion were incessantly fixed upon him, and that, though the Empress

[1] *Ad Const.* i. 6: "Deus cognitionem sui docuit potius quam exegit. . . . Deus universitatis est Dominus; obsequio non eget necessario, *non requirit coactam confessionem.*"

Eusebia had secured his elevation, the eunuchs and the court prelates were watching an opportunity for his destruction. The Arians in this assembly relied so securely on the protection of Constantius that they even ventured to insult Julian to his face.[1] The Caesar was compelled to hide his resentment; Saturninus and his adherents sent false accounts of the synod to the Emperor, and having secured the banishment of their enemy into Phrygia, felt at last that they could sleep securely, having got rid of the only opponent whom they feared. All that Hilary could say in answer to the unknown charge against him was, "That not only had he never done anything unworthy of the sanctity of a bishop, but nothing even unworthy of the uprightness of a layman."

[1] *Ad Const.* ii. 2, where Hilary appeals to Julian's testimony, "qui *plus* in exsilio meo *contumeliae a malis*, quam ego injuriae, pertulit."

X

Continued

HILARY IN EXILE

"Contra Arianos Latini sermonis tuba."—Jer. *in Ruf.* 2.

SECTION II

The methods of punishment in the Empire, effective as they were, cost singularly little. If for any reason a person became obnoxious, he was simply ordered to go into exile. Sometimes the place of his exile was defined, sometimes it was not. He never dreamed either of disputing the fiat, or of going to any other place than that assigned to him. He went at his own expense, and had to provide for himself as best he could. Some of the unfortunate bishops whom Constantius exiled for their orthodoxy were reduced to the extremest misery. Paulinus of Trèves had to beg his bread.

It was in direct opposition to the genius of Roman law to punish a man unheard and uncondemned. But under the imperial régime autocrats went even further than this. They sometimes ordered a person who had displeased them, as Augustus ordered Ovid, to betake himself to the remotest corner of the Empire, without so much as informing him of the reason for his banishment.

Hilary never knew the exact nature of the information which Saturninus had whispered against him into the ear of Constantius. He only knew that it was a lie, and that he was defenceless against it. He shared the fate of many nameless confessors, and obeyed without a murmur the iniquitous decree. We hear of no demonstrations in his favour, but it is a proof of the steadfast loyalty of his Church towards him that he still continued to be regarded as Bishop of Pictavi, and that, though he had been condemned by an Emperor, a Metropolitan, and a Synod, no attempt was made to treat his see as vacant, or to elect another bishop in his place. He told the Emperor that he still continued to be the bishop and to rule his Church.

The place assigned for his banishment was simply "Asia." He might live anywhere he liked within the ten provinces of Asia. The exact spot of his residence was to be kept as much as possible a secret, in order to hinder his intercourse with Gaul.[1] He wrote many letters from his exile to the Gallic bishops, especially from the chief towns of the provinces, but they remained for the most part unanswered. This was a deep grief to him. He was unaware that his letters generally failed to reach their destination, and did not suspect that this had perhaps been purposely arranged.

In vain he addressed to Constantius his second letter, in which he protests his innocence of any crime which would justify his banishment. He says that if the charge against him is respecting some matter of faith, he will maintain in a discussion before the Emperor the soundness of his creed. If it is on a matter of conduct, he declares himself free from any stain, and says that he

[1] *De Syn.* 63.: "Asianae decem provinciae *intra quas consisto.*" Jerome and Sulpicius Severus say that he was banished to Phrygia.

is the victim of a clique, not of a crime. "I have," he says, "a weighty witness of the justice of my complaint, my lord, your religious Caesar, Julian." The letter reached the Emperor in 360, but he took no notice of its contents. Hilary had not seen enough of Julian to conjecture the hypocritical character of his Christian conformity.

The Praefect of the East was a brilliant and accomplished Arian, who had won so much admiration from the Emperor by translating and explaining some Manichean treatise that he had changed his name from Strategius to Musonianus.[1] He was then young, and had rendered services to the Arian cause in A.D. 343 at the Council of Sardica. He put no hindrances in Hilary's way, and had probably been instructed to see that he was treated with civility. But there had been a good reason why Asia had been assigned as the residence of Hilary. It was because the whole region was permeated with Arianism.

Hilary gives a sad account of the Asiatic bishops. Most of them were heretical, and they looked upon subservience to the Emperor as a sufficient excuse for their heresy. They seemed to think that their services to truth were discharged when they had signed some Arianising formula, and so deep was their ignorance that they did not realise the duties of sincerity of belief and innocence of life. Hilary found himself in a new and strange world. "Amid the heretical persistence of so many blaspheming bishops," he says, "it seems a matter of congratulation if one finds one that is penitent."[2] What horrified him even more than their culpable indifference was the wretched dialectic sophistry with which the abler ones among them strove to argue for victory and

[1] Amm. Marc. xv. 13. [2] *De Syn.* 63.

not for the faith. It would have been better that they should be ignorant of the truth than that they should abuse it.

His period of exile was far from fruitless either to himself or to the world. He indulged in no lamentations; he entered into no intrigues. He met his hard fate with the dignity and composure of a true man, and in his new circumstances witnessed with advantage the lands and customs of strangers, and learnt the perils from which the Christian faith had yet to be delivered. Anxious that his misfortunes should neither prostrate his energies nor impair his usefulness in the cause of truth, he read, thought, and studied more deeply than before. He had already learnt his doctrine of the Trinity independently from Scripture, but he now saw that many Christians had sunk into Arianism, not out of moral obliquity, but only from want of knowledge. They professed to ground their doctrines on Scripture, but were unable to grasp its true meaning. With a more facile mastery of the Greek language and literature than he had previously possessed, and with a practical insight into the perplexities by which the Eastern bishops were led astray, he devoted himself with a thankful heart to the production of the work *On the Trinity*, which must always be regarded as his masterpiece.[1] By this treatise Hilary rendered greater services to the Nicene faith than he could possibly have effected had not his destiny been

[1] *De Trin.* x. 4. It is generally known as his work *On the Trinity*, but Jerome cites it as *The Twelve Books against the Arians*, and to Sozomen and others in the fifth century it was known as the book *On Faith*. Perhaps Hilary entitled it *On Faith, against the Arians, Twelve Books*. The present title is, however, sufficiently accurate, although but little space is given to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which in Hilary's days had neither been so definitely formulated nor so directly impugned as it was at a later period.

shaped by the heretical malice of Constantius and the Bishop of Arles. Kindled to indignation by the madness of error,[1] "he seems," says Erasmus, "to have put forth his whole strength so as to manifest in this work all that he could achieve by intellect, by eloquence, and by knowledge of divine literature."[2] He tells us that he had paid deep attention to the order and arrangement of his thoughts and arguments with the earnest intention of smoothing difficulties.[3] After laying the foundations of positive doctrine in an uncontroversial manner in the first book, he proceeds in the second to develop the mystery of the Incarnation, and in the third to illustrate the full meaning of the saying, "I am in the Father and the Father in me." The three next books are mainly devoted to the refutation of the objections of heretics—especially of those which were deduced from the Old Testament—and to a searching exposure of their inconsistencies and shifts. The seventh book shows how the Arians contradict each other, and continues the demonstration of Christian divinity both from the subjective and the objective standpoint. In the eighth he shows the relation of this truth to the doctrine of the Divine Unity. The ninth, tenth, and eleventh books continue the argument both by refutations of counter-arguments, removal of difficulties, and insistence on Scriptural proofs. In the last book he triumphantly marshals his final conclusions, pressing his adversaries with the weight of Scripture testimony, stating in its fulness the Catholic doctrine, and ending with a noble prayer. It is easy to point out blemishes in the book. Hilary was dealing with a difficult subject, and therefore appeared to be deficient in clearness even to some

[1] *De Trin.* i. 17 : "Horum igitur furori respondere animus exarsit."
[2] Erasm. *Ep. Dedicat. in lib.* i. [3] Id. i. 20.

of his most admiring contemporaries. His arguments are sometimes too subtly dialectical; his sentences sometimes too ponderously long; his imagery sometimes too abundant. But the book will reflect immortal distinction upon his name, and it is one of the most able, eloquent, and original of all which the Arian controversy evoked.

The Arians had hitherto been obliged to content themselves with such subterfuges as they could find by nominally accepting the First Creed of Sirmium; but now that the three synods of Arles (353), Milan (354), and Beziers (356) had practically declared in their favour, they saw an opportunity for throwing off the mask. In 357 Constantius made a long stay at one of his favourite places of residence, Sirmium (Szerem), the capital of Pannonia. Released from his fears of Magnentius he now desired above all things to establish an Arian unity, and Valens and Ursacius came to Sirmium to help him, with Potamius, Bishop of Olisipo (Lisbon), and Germinius, who had been appointed Bishop of Sirmium in place of the Sabellian Photinus. Into their discussions the strange unbaptized Emperor "plunged with an eagerness, and continued with a patience which we should scarcely find nowadays in a salaried professor."[1]

Potamius had drawn up a formula known as the Second Creed of Sirmium, and this was the creed which the unhappy Hosius was cajoled, tortured, and forced to sign. The "truly holy," as Athanasius calls him,[2] "the Abrahamic old man," seeing that all Pannonia was Arian, thought that the whole Church had now abandoned the Nicene faith; and, though he refused to condemn Athanasius, he at last gave up the "Homoousion" for which he had combated in the happier days of Con-

[1] *Edinb. Rev.* Oct. 1877. [2] Ὅσιος, "holy."

stantine. The courtly Arians, who shrank from no deceit, asserted everywhere that Hosius had been the soul of this Second Synod at Sirmium, and endeavoured to beat down all the orthodox by the weight of his immense authority. There were two men, however, who refused to bow to any individual authority, even though they did not know the true facts about the poor old Bishop of Cordova. Hilary called the creed "the *blasphemy* composed at Sirmium by Hosius and Potamius." Phoebadius, the excellent and keen-sighted Bishop of Agenno[1]—"*our* Phoebadius," as Sulpicius Severus proudly calls him in one of his eloquent and sarcastic tracts against the Arians—exclaims, "I am not unaware that the name of the most aged Bishop Hosius, a man always of ready belief,[2] is being wielded against us like a battering ram, in order that the rashness of opposition may be beaten down. But to those who direct against us this engine I briefly answer—his authority cannot be accepted as final, for either he now errs, or has always erred. For if his belief was wrong for nearly ninety years, I will not believe that he is right after ninety years."

But this Second Creed of Sirmium, supported by the sham authority of Hosius, came as a treasure-trove to Eudoxius, the Arian Bishop of Antioch; and in 358 he held a synod at Antioch with his friends Acacius of Caesarea and Acacius of Tyre, who thanked the Pannonian bishops, and rejected both *Homoiousios* and *Homöousios* from the creed.

They soon, however, over-reached themselves. Eudoxius ordained the rash and heretical Aetius, promoted his followers, and banished the orthodox clergy. Some

[1] Agen in Guienne.

[2] The meaning of "Promptae semper fidei" is a little ambiguous Reinkens renders it "*von stets siegreichen Bekenntnisse*," p. 166.

of these took refuge with Basil at Ancyra, who at Easter 358 held another synod, promptly anathematised the creed of Potamius, and sent a deputation to the Emperor at Sirmium. The deputies arrived just in time. The Anomoeans had already got the ear of Constantius, and had obtained from him a favourable letter. But Basil stood high in his estimation, and once more swayed his plastic mind to the conviction that Eudoxius by his proceedings was rejecting even the Homoiousian belief, and was thus teaching stark Arianism and undoing the work achieved at Philippopolis and Sirmium. The influence exercised by Athanasius in Northern Gaul during his exile at Trèves, and by Hilary in Southern Gaul, had produced a deep effect, and was much strengthened by Basil's vigorous action. In 358 Constantius held a third synod at Sirmium, in which Basil prevailed over the Pannonian bishops. "Liberius," says Jerome, "conquered by the weariness of exile, subscribed to an heretical corruption," and was sent back to Rome. He tried to save himself by adding "and in *all* things" to the words "*like* the Father in *substance*." Eudoxius, Aetius, and their seventy Anomoean followers were banished, and the world in general was ordered to abandon the distinctive watchword of the Council of Nice, and to believe that the Son was not "of *one* substance," but only "of *like* substance" with the Father. To secure this false and meaningless unity there was to be yet another General Council. Nicomedia, first chosen as the place of meeting, was destroyed that year (358) by earthquake and conflagration, and after long discussion it was decided that the Western section of the council should meet at Rimini, and the Eastern at Seleucia.

But when we consider this crash of colliding creeds, we are not astonished at the exclamation of Hilary. "It

is for us a very perilous and even deplorable fact that there are as many creeds as inclinations, as many doctrines as characters, as many sources of blasphemy spring up as there are vices among us. Creeds are written arbitrarily and understood perversely. The *Homoousion* is rejected and received and explained away by successive synods. The partial or total resemblance of the Father and the Son is a subject of dispute for these unhappy times. Every year, nay, every month, we make new creeds to define invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, we anathematise those whom we have defended. We condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others; and reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin. As there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so there should be one creed; but we depart from the one creed, and while more are made, the result of their appearance is that no creed is left. We fight about words, we dispute about novelties, we get up quarrels about uncertainties, and we mutually anathematise each other till scarcely any one is of Christ. We drift about in the uncertain world of doctrine, and either throw things into confusion while we teach, or go astray while we are taught." This and more to the same effect may be seen in the fourth and fifth sections of his second letter to Constantius.

Early in 359 Hilary published his famous and useful pamphlet *On Synods*, which, though Jerome found its transcription so tedious, rendered yet another memorable service to the Church. It was in the highest and most beautiful sense an *Eirenicon;* an endeavour to produce peace, not by hollow and unfaithful compromise, but by removing the confusions which clung to technical words which might be understood in

different senses, and by showing the real grounds of unity which underlay the seeming discord. During his three years' exile he had learnt among other things that many of Basil's party were *not* Arians, but only shrank from the Nicene watchword, partly from want of metaphysical insight, partly from dread of Sabellian confusions. He found too that there were many false reports about the acts of the numerous councils and the meaning of the numerous creeds which marked this epoch, and he was anxious to meet the wishes of the Gallic bishops by informing them of the true state of the case.

For at last he had heard from his Gallic brethren, just as he had come to the despairing determination to write to them no more on ecclesiastical subjects. The reason why his many letters had remained unanswered was very simple. Some of them had never reached their destination; to others they had not known where to reply, because Hilary was moving from place to place, and had given them no direction.[1] At the end of 358, to his heartfelt joy, the long silence was effectually broken, and he learnt that the Gallic bishops had from the first been true to him and to his cause. It was for their sakes that he undertook the difficult task of dissipating the prevalent mistrust and error by a true account of recent creeds and synods.

The book, which consists of ninety-two chapters, was written with great diligence. He made a new and careful translation of the Greek creeds. After a general introduction (ch. 1-9), in which he entreats his readers to form no judgment of his book until they have read it to the end, he gives an account of Basil's synod at Ancyra and the Second Sirmian Creed. He carefully explains the word οὐσία, "essence" or "substance," and supports the emphatic

[1] *De Syn.* 1: "Litteris sumptis quarum lentitudinem ac raritatem de exsilii mei *et longitudine et secreto* intelligo constitisse."

condemnation of the Anomoeans (ch. 10-28). Reverting to "the Creed of the Dedication" (Antioch, A.D. 341), he removes the error which had risen from the use of the phrase "three *Hypostases*," by which had only been meant "Three Persons," and regrets that the Council had not spoken more *definitely* on the oneness of essence (ch. 29-33). He then gives and criticises the creed of Philippopolis (A.D. 344), the First Sirmian Creed (A.D. 351), and the decisive anathemas against Photinus (ch. 38-61). After dwelling on the inevitable deficiencies of language to express God's incomprehensible infinitude (ch. 62, 63), he gives his own profession of faith (ch. 64). At this point the *historical* part of his pamphlet ends, and after repeating his entreaty to his episcopal friends to suspend their judgment until they have heard him out (ch. 66), he enters on his chief point, which is to give an exact conception of what is meant by the two clashing war-cries "of *like* substance" and "of *one* substance."

I. He begins with "Homoousios," "of *one* or the same substance." It may be misunderstood in three ways—(1) to imply that there is *no* distinction of *persons* (Sabellianism); or (2) to imply a *partition* of substance; or (3) to imply that there was a time when the Persons did not separately exist. For these reasons he explains it to mean "*equal*," and in *this* ideal meaning of the word he argues that it is perfectly orthodox, and that the Eastern bishops had no reason to be afraid of its use.

II. He then deals with "Homoiousios," "of *like* substance." This word too is capable of a true and of a false sense. In its *false* sense it implied resemblance indeed, but complete inferiority. In its true sense it implies just the same thing as "of *the same* substance." "*Likeness*" means likeness to the true nature of the Father; it means therefore "equality," and therefore the exclusion of all difference; it means (in its true sense) a oneness not in unity of person but in equality of nature.[1] Thus *likeness* of substance has its ground in sameness and unity of substance, and might be used only to exclude the Photinian assertion of indiscriminate identity of total being. With these explanations he maintains that the Homoiousians merely wished to emphasise *the difference of the Persons*, and the Homoousians the *unity of substance*.[2] He tries to persuade the Semi-Arian bishops that they are in reality orthodox. "Arians," he says, "you are not. Why by denying the *Homoousion* do you allow yourselves to be *regarded* as Arians?"

So far then, the Eastern Homoiousians and the Western defenders of the Nicene watchword held in reality the same belief, and ought not to quarrel about words and shadows. But he knows

[1] *De Syn.* 74. [2] *De Syn.* 76.

how hard a task it is to remove inveterate prejudices; he knows that many will be offended by his Eirenicon. Still he is quite willing to remain an exile if only the truth prevails. "*Exsulemus semper*," he nobly said, "dummodo incipiat verum praedicari."

Proceeding to speak of Basil's "Third Sirmian Creed" he does not believe that the Anomoeans have signed it with honest intention, and he regrets its rejection of the Nicene word, although he knows that this is due (1) to the dread of Sabellianism; (2) to the previous rejection of the word in the council which condemned Paul of Samosata; and (3) to the fact that it is not found in Scripture. The two first objections vanish when the word is rightly explained, and the third applies equally to the word Trinity. He therefore entreats the Eastern bishops to abide by the decree of the Nicene Council (ch. 79-91). He ends by an affectionate appeal to his Gallic brethren. He does not know whether it would not have been more expedient for him on earthly grounds to remain silent, but he has been actuated by motives of Christian love, and much as he longs to return home, it may perhaps be better for him to die and be with Christ (ch. 92).

This admirable treatise is one of the earliest specimens of the history of doctrines. That it should excite the anger of the Arians and Anomoeans was to have been expected, nor was Hilary unprepared to find that it was a stumbling-block to some who, though orthodox, were extreme, and who cared more for words than for things. Among these was the impracticable Lucifer, who with an obstinate tenacity which disdained to follow the guidance of Athanasius himself, expressed the utmost indignation against Hilary for his readiness to hold out the right hand of fellowship to those who preferred the watchword of the Eusebians to that of the Nicene Fathers, although they practically held the same faith. Hilary did not forget his usual moderation and exquisite urbanity. He sent "to his lord and brother Lucifer" a copy of the *De Synodis* with notes and explanations, and set him the example of the soft answer which turneth away wrath.

X

Continued

HILARY AT SELEUCIA

"Among innumerable false unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal."

MILTON, *Par. Lost*, v.

SECTION III

WE must now narrate the story of the Synod of Seleucia, which is as deplorable as that of so many other ecclesiastical assemblies.

The court-bishops who sat at the ear of Constantius had cunningly tried the principle of *divide et impera* by splitting the general council into two, and protecting their Anomoean and Semi-Arian friends among the Eastern bishops at Seleucia from contact with the sounder faith of the Western bishops assembled at Ariminum. They had a creed ready for both councils to sign. It was the "Fourth Creed of Sirmium," and had been drawn up by the Semi-Arian Mark of Arethusa. Constantius was determined at last to get rid of the theological discords which had troubled his whole reign, and to establish by force a universal Homoiousian creed.

The bishops might have said of Seleucia, as Pope

John XXIII. said of Constance, "what a fine trap to catch foxes in!" It was the obscure and desolate capital of a country afflicted by the incorrigible Isaurian bandits, who were at present kept in order by the military Count Lastricius. To him, and still more directly to Leonas, a count of the palace, was entrusted the "management" of the council.

Had all the invited bishops been present they would have formed a goodly multitude, but only 160 came to their dreary and isolated place of rendezvous about the middle of Sept. 359. Among them came Hilary from his Phrygian exile, as the sole representative of the bishops of the West. He had been conveyed thither at the expense of the State, and probably owed his unexpected invitation to the admiration felt for his learning and the love inspired by his gentle and noble personality. How he—an exiled and orthodox bishop—came to be invited is uncertain; but it may have been owing to the influence of Basil of Ancyra, who relied on him for help against the extreme Arians.

Besides himself, there were but thirty-six orthodox bishops present, namely, all the Egyptian bishops except George, the bad usurper at Alexandria. On the other hand there were but nineteen open Anomoeans. The remaining 105 were Semi-Arians of the respectable party of Basil of Ancyra.

On Sept. 27, 359, the first sitting opened with an ominous and discreditable dispute as to whether precedence should be given to personal questions of discipline involved in the accusations brought against particular bishops, or to the discussion of theological truths. Mutual charges were exchanged by Acacius of Caesarea and Cyril of Jerusalem, and other charges hung over the heads of Eustathius of Sebaste and Basil

of Ancyra. Leonas, however, intervened, and decided that dogmatic questions should have the precedence. The meeting was held in the cathedral. The majority wished for the Nicene Creed without the word *Homoousios*. But Leonas had required a full and free expression of opinion; and Acacius, George of Alexandria, Uranius of Tyre, Eudoxius of Antioch, and the Arian minority demanded the acceptance of the Fourth Sirmian Creed. They argued that nothing could be *like* God, that God could not beget, that Christ was a creature created out of nothing, and so neither truly "the Son" of God nor "like God"; and in support of these views they read a coarse and hideously blasphemous passage from a silly and wicked sermon by Eudoxius, which created a burst of indignation.[1] The debate lasted till evening. At last Sophronius of Tarsus cried out, "We do not want a new creed; the old creed of Antioch (A.D. 341) is sufficient." Thereupon the Arians slank out of the meeting and the first session ended.

The two imperial counts were in favour of the Arians, and desired the acceptance of the Fourth Sirmian Creed. Since this had proved to be hopeless, Acacius privately submitted to them a new creed which he had drawn up. It was to have been presented to the synod on the next day, Sept. 28, but on that day the majority assembled in the cathedral, closed the doors against the Arians, and without debate unanimously signed the

[1] If one can believe the stories told of Eudoxius, he must have been a pulpit buffoon of the lowest description. Socrates (ii. 43) says that on one occasion at Constantinople he exclaimed, "The Father is impious, the Son is pious"; and when a tumult arose among his hearers he made them all burst out laughing by adding, "The Father is impious because He worships no person, but the Son is pious because he worships the Father." This became a common joke at Constantinople, and "the heresiarchs frequently devised such phrases as these, and by them rent the Church in sunder!"

creed of Antioch. The Arians were not unnaturally enraged by thus having a march stolen upon them, and next day Leonas required a general meeting, declaring that the proceedings of Sept. 28 were to be held null and void. Meanwhile Basil of Ancyra and Macedonius of Constantinople had arrived, and, as they would strengthen the majority, Acacius began by insisting that no inculpated bishop should take part in the proceedings. To save time, the majority allowed the exclusion, on these grounds, of Basil, Cyril, and Eustathius. Then Leonas informed them that he had received a communication from Acacius. The bishops awaited it in silence, having no suspicion that it was a new and Arian creed, which rejected alike the three words Homoousios, Homoiousios, and Anomoios.

It was now for the first time that Hilary heard the Godhead of the Son openly disputed and denied by the Arians. He had been a silent spectator of all the sittings. No one had treated him as an inculpated bishop who should be excluded. He had not thought it right to speak, for he was a Latin among Greeks, and possibly his mastery of the Greek language was not sufficiently fluent and perfect to enable him to address the Eastern bishops on such solemn subjects. In the first sitting he had listened with indignant horror to the blasphemous frivolities of Eudoxius, but had thought it a duty to stifle his emotion. Each reading of the Acacian creed at the third sitting led to a long and irregular debate, and at last Sophronius of Pompeiopolis cried out, "If the daily expression of our private opinions is a setting forth of the faith all accurate understanding of the truth will cease." During the clamour of recriminations which followed, an Arian bishop took his seat beside the much-pained but silent Hilary, to sound him as to his opinions.

Declining to pronounce on the creed of Acacius, he asked the Arian what the creed meant by rejecting the terms "of one substance," "of *like* substance," and "unlike," and maintaining only that the Son was "'*like*' the Father"? "Christ," answered the Arian, "is *not like God*, although *like the Father*"! "That seems to me still more obscure," said Hilary. "I mean," said the Arian, "that He is *unlike God;* but He may be said to be 'like the Father,' inasmuch as the Father *wished to create such a Being in resemblance to himself.* Christ is rather the Son of the Divine Will than of the Divine Nature; but He is unlike God, since He is neither God nor *of* God."[1]

This was indeed to throw off the mask! Hilary could scarcely trust his ears; but next day (Sept. 30) it was made officially and superfluously clear that this, and nothing short of this, was indeed the real meaning of the Acacian minority. "Oh, my unhappy ears!" exclaims Hilary, "which have heard such things said by man about God, and such things about Christ proclaimed in the Church";[2] and he may well add "*Haec audiens hebui.*'"

At the fourth sitting Acacius met the objection urged by Sophronius on the previous day, by saying that as the minority wished to alter the Nicene Creed in one way, it was equally permissible to alter it in another. "Let us then," said Eleusius of Cyzicus, "simply go back to the old creed of Antioch, to which I intend to hold fast in life and in death." When Acacius was further pressed with Hilary's question, "What do you mean by *like the Father?*" he made no further pretence to conceal the fact that he only meant *likeness of will;* a predicate which obviously might be applied to a mere man.

[1] *In Const.* 14. [2] *In Const.* 13.

By this time the Count Leonas was heartily sick of an endless, barren, and embittered discussion. Next day (Oct. 1) when the majority wanted to press matters to a final conclusion, he refused to be present. "I was sent," he said, "by the Emperor to be present at a united assembly. Go and babble in the church by yourselves!"

The bishops did as they were told. They at once agreed to the creed of Antioch, and then proceeding to matters of discipline they deposed Eudoxius of Antioch, and appointed in his place Anianus, who was promptly arrested and sent into exile by the two Counts. They also deposed Acacius, Uranius, George of Alexandria, and others, and sent a deputation of bishops to Constantius, among whom were Basil and Theodoret of Cyrus. Hilary accompanied them, not knowing what would come of his visit to the capital, where Constantius was now preparing for his war against the Persians.

But Acacius and *his* followers were beforehand with them, and the minority prevailed.

For Constantius was already burning with wrath at the news brought by the orthodox deputation from Rimini that, by a majority of three-fourths, they had rejected the Fourth Sirmian Creed and deposed Valens and Ursacius. Taurus, the imperial commissioner, who had been promised the reward of the consulship if he succeeded in manipulating the council into the views of the Emperor, was unspeakably disgusted, but with his episcopal allies he succeeded in carrying out his ends by force and cunning. The deputations from Rimini, with Phoebadius at their head, were bidden to wait at Nice till the Emperor could attend to them. A paltry synod was held at Constantinople. Macedonius was deposed and Eudoxius of Antioch thrust into his place; Eleusius

of Cyzicus was replaced by the Anomoean Eunomius; Basil, Eustathius, Sylvanus, Sophronius — all of whom had made themselves active and obnoxious against the Arians at Seleucia—were deposed and banished. "The Emperor," says Hilary afterwards, "seized the world from Christ and presented it to the Devil."[1] The melancholy tale of how he cajoled, oppressed, corrupted, and terrified the orthodox Fathers at Rimini, and sent them home with the shame of apostasy on their consciences, has been already told. Hilary had not yet learnt to see through his duplicity and worthlessness. He was earnestly demanding, in a second letter, to be confronted with Saturninus in the Emperor's presence, convinced that he could refute his accusations and convict him of heresy on the testimony of Scripture. It is in this letter that we find the celebrated passage in which he protests against the idle and arbitrary multiplication of creeds which was the disgrace of this reign.

The interview was denied him, but he received the unexpected permission to return home. The Arians were as much afraid of him as they were of Athanasius. It was not their object to let him get any influence over the Emperor. Meanwhile they thought that he was, from their point of view, safer at home than in Asia. During his exile he had indefinitely weakened their influence. He had prevented the triumph of the Anomoeans, and he had dealt them two deadly blows by the publication of his books *On the Trinity* and *On Synods*.

There were four chief parties :—

1. The HOMOOUSIANS.—This was the Catholic and orthodox part of the Church. It was represented predominantly by Athanasius

[1] *In Const.* 15.

and Hilary. All who held firmly to the creed of Nice were called Homoousians from their adherence to the word "*homoousion*," "of one substance with the Father," the adoption of which had been the distinctive outcome of the first Œcumenical Council.

2. The HOMOIOUSIANS.—This was the name given to the Arian party in general, who were also called *Eusebians*, from the leadership of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Eusebius of Caesarea. Their watchword was *Homoiousios*, "of *like* substance with the Father." But this party was wide enough to include several different shades of opinion and lines of action. For instance,

3. The SEMI-ARIANS repudiated the stark negations of Arianism, and were willing to concede every definition of Godhead in the nature of the Divine Son, so long as the word *homoousion* was excluded. This word they disliked, because it seemed to them to savour of Sabellianism, which "confounded the Persons" of the Godhead, and so seemed to sink into *Patripassianism*—the heresy that God the Father suffered on the Cross. To this party belonged many excellent but ill-instructed Eastern bishops, who were headed by Basil of Ancyra. We have seen with what tenderness and moderation they were treated by Athanasius, and we shall see how Hilary also held out to them the right hand of tolerance and fellowship. They were a half and half party, and belong more to the history of the Church than that of dogma. They showed little productivity or power of clear independent thought.[1]

4. Directly opposed to these were the ANOMOEANS,[2] headed by Aetius and his pupil Eunomius. They rejected the orthodox belief, but could at least see that the position of the Semi-Arians was weak and illogical. They refused to believe that the Son was God, but they saw that if he was not God he must be a created Being, and therefore *unlike* the Father (*anomoios*), in which case both the Homoousians and the Homoiousians were wrong. This party was both small and short-lived. It hardly survived the refutations of Eunomius by Basil and Gregory of Nyssa.

5. Midway between the Semi-Arians and the Anomoeans stood the court party and the mere *political* Semi-Arians. They were probably Anomoeans in their secret hearts, but they were practically "trimmers" and time-servers, who veered with every varying wind of opinion in the court and Church. They were also called *Homoeans*, because they admitted that the Son was like the

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1 Dorner, *Lehre von der Person Christi*. i. 860.

2 They were also called *Heterousiasts* (ἐξ ἑτέρας οὐσίας, "of a *different* substance"), and *Exoukontians* (because they said that the Son was created ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, "from things non-existent").

Father "in all things," according to the Scriptures; and *Acacians* because they were represented by Acacius, who had succeeded the historian Eusebius in the see of Caesarea. The subtlest, most persistent, and most unscrupulous of their agents were, however, the two inveterate ecclesiastical intriguers, Valens, Bishop of Mursa (Essek), and Ursacius, Bishop of Singidunum (Belgrade), of whom, for years together, we hear everywhere but in their own sees, and by whose incessant and venomous whisperings into the ear of the Emperor the cause of heresy was almost won.

At the opposite extreme stood those representatives of orthodoxy who were pushed into a violence of reaction which led in the one instance to heresy and in the other to schism. These were—

6. The PHOTINIANS, who were named from Photinus, Bishop of Sirmium, and went even further than his master Marcellus of Ancyra in the use of Sabellian language, which altogether obliterated the distinction between the Father and the Son; and

7. The LUCIFERIANS, who followed the harsh and unbending Lucifer of Calaris in refusing all sympathy or forgiveness to the brethren who had fallen into any form of theological error.

Besides these there were many varying and intermediate views which were all called into being when once the dragon's teeth of Arianism had been fully sown.

The complicated perplexities of the times, which were still further embroiled by the theological vanity and incompetence of Constantius, led to a variety of creeds and councils.

A.D. 341. The Council of ANTIOCH.—It met for the dedication of a magnificent church, "the Golden Church," of which the foundation had been laid by Constantine.[1] It produced four creeds, all intended to displace the Nicene formula and to expel the word *homoousion*, although they all professed to reject Arianism. One of them was called "the Creed of the Dedication," and was said to have been written by the martyr Lucian. Another (A.D. 345) was called the *Makrostich* from its inordinate length.[2]

A.D. 347.[3] The Council of SARDICA.—Hosius presided over a hundred Western and seventy-six Eastern bishops. It split into two on the question of the admission of Athanasius, Marcellus, and

[1] This is the only Council of Antioch of which the canons have been preserved. Their twelfth canon against any bishop whom a synod has deposed was used against Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Chrysostom. Mansi reckons more than thirty councils of Antioch between A.D. 252 and 800.

[2] Socr. *H. E.* ii. 18.

[3] Mansi, Schröckh, and others, date the Council of Sardica A.D. 344.

other impugned bishops. The Eastern section (except Valens and Ursacius) retired to PHILIPPOPOLIS, drew up an Arian creed, and deposed Athanasius and Marcellus. The bishops at Sardica confirmed the Nicene Creed.

A.D. 351.[1]—The *first* Council of SIRMIUM (Szerem in Sclavonia) deposed and condemned Phontius, and drew up a creed which was fairly orthodox. But it ejected many orthodox bishops from their sees, and among them Paul of Constantinople, who was afterwards murdered at Cucusus.

A.D. 353.—The Synod of ARLES, at which Vincent, Bishop of Capua, and his fellow-delegate from Liberius, gave way, and joined in the condemnation of Athanasius. They wanted to secure at the same time an anathema against Arius, but were told that his opinions were not then under discussion.

A.D. 355.—The Council of MILAN was held in the palace of Constantius. Overawed by Ursacius and Valens, all the bishops, except Eusebius of Vercelli, Lucifer of Cagliari, Dionysius of Milan, and a few others, joined in a fresh condemnation of Athanasius. The recusants were banished; and, after many sufferings, Liberius and the aged Hosius gave way.

In A.D. 356 a council at Biterra (Beziers).

In A.D. 357 a second Synod of SIRMIUM, under Valens and Ursacius, accepted the "Second Creed of Sirmium," drawn up by Potamius, Bishop of Lisbon, to which Hosius was forced to subscribe. In A.D. 358 a *third* Sirmium synod compelled Valens and his party to accept the Homoiousian creed of Basil. They yielded under the pretence that by the two words (ὁμοούσιος, ὁμοιούσιος) they had always understood the same thing![2] This synod, with the aid of Fortunatian of Aquileia, compelled Pope Liberius to give way and to condemn Athanasius.

A.D. 358.—The Synod of Antioch, under Eudoxius of Antioch, Acacius, and others, accepted the Second Creed of Sirmium.

A.D. 359. The Council of RIMINI.—It rejected the heretical "Third Creed of Sirmium,"[3] and sent a deputation to Constantius requesting dismissal. Constantius temporised; Valens and Ursacius intrigued and terrorised; the bishops succumbed, and "the whole world groaned in amazement to find that it was Arian."

A.D. 359.—The *Eastern* half of the Council of Rimini was held at SELEUCIA, and was dissolved as impracticable by Leonas, the imperial commissary. The majority signed "the Creed of the Dedication," anathematised the term *anomoion*, and rejected both

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[1] The dates cannot be regarded as always exact.

[2] Hil. *De Syn.* 79. [3] The ridiculous "*Dated* Creed."

homoousion and *homoiousion*. But the Acacian party managed to get the ear of Constantius before Hilary or Basil of Ancyra could do so, and that weak tyrant ordered that the creed of Rimini should be everywhere signed and accepted on pain of banishment.

A.D. 360 or 362. Council of PARIS.—Condemned the Creed of Rimini, and deposed Saturninus.

X

Continued

RETURN, DEATH, AND WRITINGS OF HILARY

"Ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ἅπαξ παραδοθείσῃ τοῖς ἁγίοις πίστει."—JUDE 3.

SECTION IV

SEVERAL of Hilary's writings belong to the period of his stay in Constantinople, or of his slow travels homeward. We are a little surprised that, having received permission to return in 360, he did not at once hasten back to his diocese with all possible speed. His return, on the contrary, was very leisurely. It occupied more than the whole year 361. The reasons by which this delay may be explained are not very obvious. In reading the history of this century we are frequently astonished to hear of the apparent ease with which bishops could absent themselves from their dioceses, without comment, for months and even years at a time. Many of them seemed to think it sufficient to govern their Churches from a distance by letters and messengers, while they aimed at the acquisition of court influence or devoted their attention to the general affairs of the Church at synods without number.

Not of course that Hilary was idle. This period of delay was filled by much literary activity. He wrote a book against Ursacius and Valens, fragments of which, or of notes written with a view to its composition, were found in a MS. bequeathed to Nicolaus Faber in 1598 from the library of P. Pithoeus. The second of these fragments has some historical importance, and Bishop Reinkens conjectures that it may have been from alarm about this book that the two Pannonian bishops used their influence to get rid of Hilary from Constantinople by sending him back to his Aquitanian home. It excited no small alarm among the Arians to hear that one whom they regarded as a "*discordiae seminarium et perturbator orientis*" should be ordered to return to Gaul![1]

Perhaps it was the unexpected kindness shown him in the revocation of his banishment which stayed him from publishing his tremendous invective against Constantius. From internal evidence it seems to have been written before he left Constantinople. His works in general are marked by tolerance and urbanity. There are only three of his opponents—Constantius, Saturninus, and Auxentius—of whom he speaks in tones of unmeasured indignation. It seems to have been the characteristic of his temper to think well of all men as long as he could, but to give the reins to all his scorn and passion if he found that he had been deceived in his estimate.[2] His wrath was not only kindled by confirmed and deliberate heresy, but by the combination of heresy with dishonesty, and its furtherance by ecclesiastical hypocrisy and subterranean intrigues. For

[1] Sulp. Severus.

[2] I have already quoted (p. 537) his violent outburst of anathema against Pope Liberius.

a long time he had tried to see whatever was good in the character of the Emperor, but during his stay at Constantinople he had for the first time began to see through his duplicity and emptiness. The passionate contempt which throbs through his denunciation proves the violence of the reaction from his former confidence.

In the second chapter he indicates the date of his treatise. It was in the fifth year of the banishment of Paulinus, Eusebius, Lucifer, and Dionysius of Milan, *i.e.* about the beginning of A.D. 360. He speaks out without the least compromise. The "most religious" Emperor, in whose piety and justice he had expressed sincere confidence in his first two letters in 355 and 360, now becomes a deceitful persecutor, a fawning foe; an Antichrist, who does not torture the body, but seduces the heart; who does not smite the back, but pampers the belly; who does not provide for life, but enriches to death; who does not threaten a stake in the present, but kindles a hell for the future; who does not confer the liberty of the prison, but the slavery of the palace; who confesses Christ only to deny Him, and aims at unity for the destruction of peace. He tells him that he shall address him exactly as he would have addressed Nero, or Decius, or Maximian, had he been living in their evil days.

"It is time to speak," he begins; "the time for holding my peace has passed by. Let Christ be expected, for Antichrist has prevailed. Let the shepherds cry, for the hirelings have fled." He has long controlled and suppressed his indignation; it would be wrong to do so any longer. Faithfulness, not passion, forces him to speak. The very times of torture and persecution were better and less perilous than those

of sly and corrupting intrigue. He must speak the truth, for he is a minister of the truth.

"Thou are fighting against God, thou ragest against the Church, thou persecutest the saints, thou hatest the preachers of Christ, thou art annulling religion; thou art a tyrant no longer only in the human, but in the divine sphere. . . . Thou lyingly declarest thyself a Christian, but art a new enemy of Christ. Thou art a precursor of Antichrist, and workest the mysteries of his secrets. Thou composest creeds, and livest contrary to the faith. Thou art a teacher of profanity, but ignorant of all that belongs to the fear of God. Thou art giving bishoprics to thy creatures, and changing good bishops for bad. Thou art committing priests to prison, and arraying thine armies to terrify the Church. Thou assemblest synods, but dost violence to the creed of the Westerns. While they are shut up in one city thou frightenest them with threats, weakenest them with hunger, paralysest with cold, and corruptest through flattery. With crafty skill thou dost cherish the discords of the Orientals; thou invitest them with caresses; by a new and unheard of triumph of craft thou weavest thy devilish victory, and persecutest without inflicting martyrdom. Oh Nero, oh Decius, oh Maximian, we are more indebted to your savagery! . . . But thou, oh cruellest of all cruel men, ragest against us more ruinously and less excusably. . . . Thou killest with blandishment; under the mask of religion thou practisest impiety. This hath that father of thine, that murderer from the beginning, taught thee; to prevail without seeming obstinate, to stab without the sword, to persecute without infamy, to lie without detection, to dictate creeds without belief, to flatter without kindliness, to carry out thy purpose without

revealing what thy real purpose is."[1] He compares him to a wolf in sheep's clothing, and bitterly upbraids him with his conduct at Milan, at Trèves, at Seleucia; with his persecutions at Toulouse, his conduct to Liberius, his violence towards the Eastern bishops, and his manifold heresies. In reading this tremendous counterblast to the Emperor's craft and hypocrisy, we see that it was called forth by the disgraceful conduct of Constantius towards the two Councils of Rimini and Seleucia. His whole policy towards the Eastern and Western bishops had been moulded by the worldliness and deceit of his ecclesiastical supporters. It was the hideous spectacle of falsity and meanness which accounted for if it did not excuse this outburst of wrathful scorn. Some allowance must no doubt be made for the influence of Hilary's literary models, but at the best such invectives need a very strong justification, and the example set by them is often much more honoured in the breach than in the observance. But, as Möhler says in palliation of the saint's vehemence, "If we drive men to despair, we must expect to hear from them the language of despair."

It is impossible to say what would have been the effect of this pamphlet upon the mind of the Emperor if he had ever read it. So furious an attack, the application to himself of such vehement insults, could hardly be treated as anything short of high treason, and hardly be punished by any penalty short of death. Constantius shrank from making actual martyrs of bishops. He preferred to win them over by polite attentions, and to corrupt their constancy by flattery and reward. It was this line of conduct which woke Hilary's special loathing, because it seemed to him as dangerously successful as

[1] The passage illustrates the iterative verbosity of Hilary's exuberant style.

it was basely cunning. It is true that Constantius had not put Lucifer of Cagliari to death when he received his bitter philippics. He could hardly believe that they were genuine, but sent them back to the bishop by Bonosus to ask if he had really written them. Lucifer replied that he had, and that he was ready to die. But while the eccentric fanaticism of Lucifer might be despised, the case of Hilary was far different. The reproaches of a man so eminent and usually so self-restrained would wake a far more thundering echo in men's breasts. But Hilary seems to have been so far mollified by the revocation of his banishment as to hold back the pamphlet for a time. If it saw the light at all before the Emperor's death, it found him so terribly embroiled in the suppression of Julian's revolt as to leave him no leisure for attention to Church affairs. He was absorbed in the effort to crush his audacious rival, and on Nov. 3, 361, he died of a fever at Mopsucrene near Tarsus, as he was on his way to the battle in which his destiny would have been decided.

During his slow progress homewards Hilary wrote an affectionate letter to his young daughter Abra. He had heard a rumour that she was being sought in marriage. He sends her a hymn and recommends her to prefer a life of celibacy, and to devote herself to the heavenly bridegroom. At the same time he advises her to consult her mother, and leaves her to her own free choice. The letter is not in Hilary's usual style either of thought or language, and its genuineness cannot be regarded as certain.

We need hardly dwell on the purely legendary incidents of his homeward journey. He passed through Italy. St. Martin of Tours, whose friendship he had

early enjoyed in Poictiers, and whom he would have consecrated to the priesthood but for Martin's modest objections, had been driven from Illyricum by furious persecution, and had begun the attempt to found a monastery at Milan. The attempt failed through the opposition of Auxentius, the temporising Arian, who had been made Bishop of Milan in place of the exiled Dionysius. Accompanied by a holy presbyter, Martin had retired to the desolate island of Gallinaria (Urgo or Gorgona), and afterwards to Capraria in the Ligurian Sea, where the two lived on herbs only. He wished to meet Hilary at Rome, but found that the Bishop of Poictiers had already left the city. It is said that Hilary also had made an attempt to find Martin in Gallinaria, and found that he had started for Rome. He signalised his visit to that region by freeing the island of Capraria from serpents, which he forced to confine themselves to a single corner of the rocks.

At last, about the beginning of 362, Hilary reached his home and his diocese, and it is needless to add that he was received with joy and thankfulness. These years must have been gladdened by intercourse with St. Martin, who having rejoined Hilary in Gaul, established near Poictiers the monastery of Locociagum, now *Lugugé*. Of the more peaceful labours of preaching and organisation in which he engaged we are told but little, but two controversies occupied much of his remaining life.

Saturninus of Arles, by court influence and diplomatic methods, had hitherto succeeded in eluding Hilary's endeavours to confront him face to face. He had improved in no respect, and his metropolitical government had been stained not only by heresy but by all sorts of worldliness and malversation. The com-

plaints against him were manifold. In 361 a synod of Gallic bishops was assembled at Paris in order to deal with the case of the bishops who had shown weakness or ignorance at Rimini. They were mildly treated, and all who expressed regret and withdrew from their compromise with Arianism were freely re-admitted to communion. In this synod Saturninus was unanimously excommunicated by the Gallic bishops, and with him Auxentius, Ursacius, and Valens. In the whole of Gaul and Aquitania the metropolitan of Arles found but a single adherent. It was Paternus, the eccentric Bishop of Perigeux, who shared his ban. Of Saturninus, thus completely defeated and isolated, we hear no more. Hilary had cleared Gaul from all participation in the guilt of Arianism.

The Emperor Julian singled out Athanasius for his peculiar hatred, but he does not seem to have come into any direct collision with Hilary, whom perhaps he had learnt to respect at Beziers. His successor Jovian ended his brief reign on Feb. 17, 364. When Valentinian was elected Emperor, Hilary was at Milan endeavouring to suppress and depose the Bishop Auxentius. In his efforts to undo the mischief caused at Rimini he was ably assisted by Eusebius of Vercelli, who had been banished to the Thebais by Constantius in 355, but had been recalled by Julian with the other exiled bishops. Aided by Eusebius, he left his diocese in 362, soon after his return to it, and went to Italy, where he remained for nearly three years, till the autumn of 364.

The position of Auxentius had been much strengthened by the death in exile of Dionysius, his orthodox predecessor. No attempt had been made to displace him. Valentinian professed principles of the broadest toleration, and forbade every attempt to elect another

bishop. Nevertheless Hilary did not hesitate to visit Milan, and openly expressed his belief that Auxentius was an Arian, a hypocrite, and a liar; and such was the fame and influence of the Bishop of Poictiers, that though Auxentius repudiates the interference of Hilary, who had himself been condemned by his metropolitan, Saturninus, the Emperor ordered the case to be examined. The bishops, together with Hilary and Auxentius, were to meet in the presence of two imperial officials. They declined to examine any question but that of the creed of the Bishop of Milan, who then declared his belief that "Christ was very God, and of one Godhead and substance with the Father." Hilary required that the creed should be handed in by Auxentius in his own writing. He did so, he claimed the authority of various councils, and objected to Hilary and Eusebius as bishops who had been condemned and banished from their own sees ten years before, and were now needlessly meddling in alien provinces. He denied that he had ever known or even seen Arius, or been acquainted with his views; and declared that he had learnt from Scripture his belief in "*Deum verum Filium ex vero Deo patre.*" Hilary in reply accused Auxentius of falsehood in denying that he knew anything about Arian doctrine, seeing that he had once been a presbyter under an intruded Arian Bishop of Alexandria. He also called attention to the subtle and studied deceitfulness of the formula "Deum verum Filium ex vero Deo Patre," to which, by a mere change of punctuation, Auxentius might, as he chose, attach the meaning that Christ was "the very God," or the widely different meaning that "Christ was God, a very Son of the very Father." Valentinian refused to enter into verbal minutiae. He simply ordered Hilary to leave Milan,

where indeed he had no rights either political or ecclesiastical, and to return home. Hilary did so, but in 365, to discharge his conscience, he addressed his book *against Auxentius* to the Italian bishops. He anticipates that it may lead to his being persecuted, but to that consequence he is indifferent. "Precious is the name of peace; beautiful the idea of unity, but who knows not that the only true unity of the Churches, the only true peace of the Gospel, is the unity in Christ?" The treatise is remarkable not only for the theological acumen with which he exposes the subterfuges of Auxentius, but also for the energy with which he warns his episcopal brethren against succumbing to the seductive influences of the imperial court. Nor was his effort fruitless. It is probable that Auxentius, though he managed to hoodwink the Emperor, remained to the last a secret Arian, and he was excommunicated by Pope Damasus at a Roman synod in 359. He continued Bishop of Milan to 374; but during all this time, and long after Hilary was dead, he dared not teach his real opinions. His Church was orthodox, and he had to shape his teaching into accordance with the views of his people. He was succeeded by the great bishop who was then only a catechumen—the Consular Ambrose. During the later years of his life (A.D. 360-366) Hilary devoted much labour to a book in refutation of Valens and Ursacius, in which he narrated the full story of the Councils of Rimini and Seleucia. The book is no longer extant, but in 1598 N. Faber published fifteen fragments which belong to it. They are probably genuine, but may contain some interpolations, especially in matters connected with Liberius. In some of the letters his fall is darkened, in others his authority is magnified. On the supposed supremacy of Rome, Hilary, if the frag-

ments are all genuine, uses language which recognises a certain primacy in the Pope, though elsewhere he speaks of Peter's confession, not of Peter himself, as the rock on which Christ built His Church.[1]

Among Hilary's latest writings was a little tract against the physician Dioscorus, a refutation of heathendom, which was probably written during the reign of Julian; and a book on the sacraments. These are no longer extant, and, except in fragments, we no longer possess the commentaries which Hilary wrote, in homilies, or otherwise, on the greater part of the New Testament. Those which have been sometimes attributed to him are of uncertain genuineness and inferior style.[2] Of his allegorical commentary on St. Matthew we have already spoken. His chief extant commentary is that on the Psalms, in which, says Jerome, "he imitated Origen, but added some original elements." It was in Asia that he had drunk large draughts of the spirit of the Alexandrian school in general and of its mighty master in particular. With the sounder exegetical opinions of the Antiochene school he was acquainted, but, though he did not by any means condemn them,[3] he was as unable, as the majority in his day and for centuries afterwards, to see that they alone are historically tenable. In his commentary he relies on the "inspiration" of the Septuagint, quotes no authorities, and follows to an extreme the allegorical and typical

[1] *De Trin.* vi. 36-38.

[2] There is some probability that they may be by Theodore of Mopsuestia. See Swete's edition of *Theod. Mops.*

[3] *In Ps. cxx.* 1, comp. liv. 9: "Non sum nescius *plerosque* solum verborum sensum et literam contuentes, nihil de omnibus fere Psalmis congruum personae Domini nostri Jesu Christi existimare. . . . *sed nos litem non movemus.*" He speaks more strongly against literal exegesis *in Ps. cxxiv.* 1.

method.[1] The result is of course exegetically disastrous. Hilary's notes abound in fine moral, spiritual, and theological truths, but they have often no real connection with the passages from which they are supposed to be deduced. It would be absurd to complain that Hilary did not anticipate the results of that scientific, historical, contextual exegesis, which was not established in the Church till thirteen centuries later, but two very brief instances will suffice to illustrate the defects of his exegetic style.

1. Many psalms have the superscription, "To the chief musician," which in the Septuagint is rendered εἰς τὸ τέλος and in the Vulgate "in finem." Hilary necessarily adopts the wrong translation, and borrows from Eusebius the groundless inference that psalms with this title could have no reference to contemporary history, but must all refer to Christ.[2]

2. Again, in one of the exquisite nature psalms (Ps. cxlvi.), after but a slighting notice of the beautiful literal sense, he proceeds to explain, "He feedeth the young ravens which call upon him," and he says that to explain it literally would not only be an error but an act of extreme impiety—"Haec ita intelligere, non dicam erroris *sed irreligiositatis extremae* est."

Similar instances might be furnished without number, and they show that Hilary had wholly accepted the allegorical system, with the result that while his teaching is often admirable, his interpretations, as such, are wholly unscientific, because he rejected the primary and literal sense to search for hidden mysteries which were

[1] *Prol.* 5: "Sunt enim universa allegoricis et typicis contexta virtutibus." *In Ps. cl.* 1: "Magnis Psalmorum librum sacramentis rerum coelestium refertum esse saepe tractavimus."

[2] *Praef. in Libr. Psalm.* sec. 18.

often far inferior to the true meaning, and could only be educed by subjective and arbitrary processes.

The style of Hilary is formed on that of Quintilian.[1] He is often eloquent and nearly always interesting, but his sentences are long and his meaning is often ambiguous.[2]

Hilary also wrote a book of hymns, and was the earliest hymnologist among the Latin Fathers. The few hymns which have come down to us in his name have merit, but we are not certain that they are genuine. The *Gloria in Excelsis* and the *Te Deum* have both been attributed to him, but on insufficient grounds.[3]

He spent the last three years of his life mainly at Poictiers. The year in which he died is not certain. According to Sulpicius Severus it was in the sixth year after the revocation of his exile, and therefore probably on Jan. 13, 366.

Of his closing years few details are given, but his whole life speaks for him. He was in the best sense what he calls himself—"a disciple of truth."[4] He was a man of clear intellect, of transparent sincerity, of noble bearing, of stainless character. He will ever rank with Athanasius as one of the best and ablest defenders of the Catholic faith. In Jan. 1852, Pope Pius IX., at the request of the Synod of Bordeaux, accorded to him the well deserved title of "a teacher of the universal Church." It is true that on the subject of Christ's perfect humanity, and on the distinction between the Son and the Spirit, Hilary's language is not always rigidly orthodox or consistent; but, as St. Augustine says, many dogmas of the Catholic faith acquired precision

[1] Jer. *Ep.* 83 : "Quintilianum et stilo imitatus est et numero."

[2] Jerome (*Ep.* 13, *ad Paulin.*) talks of his "Gallic buskin" and his Greek flowers. [3] Opp. *Praef.* viii. (ed. 1693). [4] *C. Const.* 12.

from the studies necessitated by the assaults of heretics, and were "weighed more carefully, understood more clearly, preached more earnestly," after the days of Hilary. Jerome said that he had found no stumbling-block in the writings of Hilary, and alike a Romanist theologian like Möhler and a Protestant like Dorner agree in their high estimate of his theological learning.[1]

We may be thankful that God raised up such men to defend and preserve the faith of His Church; yet these long controversies left a legacy of prolific evils. Well might Gregory of Nazianzus complain that the Church had been torn asunder, cities thrown into commotion, and peoples driven into arms, and that at the same time house had been divided against house and family against family by questions of abstract theology presumptuously discussed, while the duties of practical holiness were terribly neglected. But the great theologians were not to blame. Heresy arose, and it was their duty to refute it. "It must needs be that offences come," but it was to the heretics, and not on the defenders of Catholic truth that the warning was applicable—"Woe unto him through whom they come." And to Hilary will always belong the glory of having been the author of the first adequate Latin commentary on the Gospel narrative, of the first good history of many councils, and of the first great Latin book on dogmatic theology.

[1] Those who desire to enter into these theological questions will find them very fully discussed in the preface to the Benedictine edition (pp xiv.-lxxii.), where all the relevant passages are quoted.

XI

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

"O vere pretiosa chlamys—quid tale vel ostro
Vel ducto in filum pensis rutilantibus auro
Insignes meruere habitus?"—PAULINUS.

THE life of St. Martin has no literary significance, for he was not an author; but it is in other respects so important and characteristic that it cannot be omitted from our list of biographies. It does not require to be detailed at length. As a bishop, as a missionary, as one who had the reputation of a wonder-worker,[1] as one of the chief founders of monasticism in the West, Martin exercised a widespread influence, and he left behind him an historic as well as a legendary fame. Owing partly to the eloquent and facile style of his biographer, Sulpicius Severus, his name was known from Armenia to Egypt more widely than that of any other monk or bishop of his day.[2]

[1] His thaumaturgic fame depends on the testimony of Sulpicius Severus, who evidently believed what he wrote (he says "*alioquin tacere quam falsa dicere maluissem*"), but had a boundless credulity.

[2] Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* i. 19. The biography, Dialogues, Epistles, and one section of the Chronicon of Severus, are our chief authorities for St. Martin. Venantius Fortunatus does little more than epitomise Severus, as does the poet Paulinus. St. Gregory of Tours cannot be regarded as a trustworthy authority, and his account of Martin is mostly legendary. Sozomen (iii. 16) says but little. The best life is that by Bishop Reinkens

He was born at Sabaria, now Stein-am-Anger, in Pannonia, but trained at Ticinum. His father was a soldier who rose from infantry service to the dignity of a tribune, and who therefore occupied a high position.

He was born A.D. 336.[1] Though both his parents were heathen, Martin fell under religious impressions in his earliest years. He became a catechumen, and embraced with such ardour the ideals of that epoch that even at the age of ten he became a catechumen against the wish of his parents, and at twelve he desired to become a hermit. But his father had very different views for him, and had him trained in all military exercises. He grew into a strong and active boy, and at the age of fifteen, in accordance with an imperial decree that the sons of veterans should be enrolled in the army, his father, who disliked his pious tendencies, had him seized, thrown into chains, and compelled to take the military oath. Martin, as the son of a tribune and as a youth of stalwart frame, would be a welcome recruit in the army. He became a cavalry officer, and was ranked in a patrol-service which involved the confidence of his superiors. His means would have allowed him to have two soldier-servants, but he was content with one, whom he treated not as a slave, but as a friend and brother. Even as a soldier his one aim was to assist the toilers, to aid the wretched, to clothe the naked, to feed the poor; of his pay he only retained sufficient for his daily maintenance. Of his actual service we are told but little, for Sulpicius Severus, like all the Christian biographers of that day, passes lightly and hurriedly

(*Martin von Tours, der Wunderthätige Mönch und Bischof*, 3ᵈ ausg. Gera. 1876). See too Newman, *Ch. of the Fathers*, ch. 10.

[1] The chronology of parts of his life is very uncertain. I follow Bishop Reinkens, who has devoted much attention to the matter.

over all that concerns the worldly life. It is probable that he took part in some of the battles and campaigns against the usurper Magnentius, which occupied the years 351 to 353.

It was in his eighteenth year that the incident occurred with which Christian art has identified his name, and which practically decided his future destiny. He was in winter quarters at Amiens, and the winter was one of intense severity, during which Martin had freely given of his goods to feed the poor. One day in January 354 he was passing through the gate of the city when he saw a poor man half-naked in the bitter cold. Martin was unable to give him alms, for he had already parted with all his money. But he was warmly clad. On his head was the gilded iron helmet with its red plume, and over his short tunic the ample sagum or military cloak (*chlamys*) was fastened by a brooch and flowed over his shoulders. He did not hesitate. Drawing his short sword, he cut the mantle into two halves, gave half to the shivering sufferer, and was content to wrap the disfigured fragment round his own person. The act had been witnessed by some of the passers-by and some of his own comrades, and they greeted it with a kindly laugh, in which Martin, who must have cut a strange figure in his half-mantle, and who was by no means deficient in humour, probably joined. But he well knew that what he had done had its serious side. If he felt a little ashamed at his appearance, there was a glow of joy in his heart as he thought of the words, "I was naked and ye clothed me." His waking thoughts reproduced themselves in nightly dreams. As he slept he thought that he saw the Lord Christ clad in his half-mantle, who bade him look and see whether that was not the half which he had given to the beggar

at the gate. Martin stood in awe-struck silence, but Jesus turned from him to the angel-choir, and cried aloud, "Martin, though he is only a catechumen, has clothed me with this garment." Whereon the happy youth awoke.

He could hesitate no longer, but earnestly sought immediate baptism, and felt that it would be his duty at the same time to leave the army. But Martin, young as he was, had proved himself an excellent soldier, and one whose influence over his comrades was of the utmost value. His tribune, who was also a Christian, was loth to part with him, and when Martin declared his desire and intention to become a monk, the tribune promised that if he would wait till his term of office was over he too would join him and leave the world. Martin was, therefore, content to defer his purpose, and remained two years longer in the army, taking his share no doubt in the hardships which marked the campaigns of Constantius against the Alamanni in the years 354 and 355. In the autumn of 355 he joined the troops whom Constantius entrusted to the command of Julian, the newly-appointed Caesar. Julian had a difficult task assigned to him. To the pitiful body of 360 foot soldiers, which were all that Constantius first entrusted to him, he had to add the regiments scattered about Gaul, and to organise them into squadrons capable of repressing the incessant inroads of countless barbarians. By dauntless courage and unwearied energy he became completely successful, and at Worms he determined to encourage his troops by giving them a donative won from the spoils of the Alamanni. Each soldier was to be summoned before him by name and to receive his gift, in order that they might be inspired to yet more heroic valour in a battle which was now

imminent. It may be, however, that the horror of recent battles had convinced Martin yet more deeply that military service in half-heathen ranks was inconsistent with the duties of a baptized Christian. When the name "Martin" was called out he stepped out of the ranks of his fellow-soldiers, and, though he was but twenty years old, spoke out boldly before his general. "Caesar," he said, "hitherto I have served in your cavalry; suffer me now to enter the service of God. Let another enjoy thy donative, who will continue in thy service. I am Christ's soldier, and must fight for you no more."[1] "You are a coward, Martin," answered Julian. "The battle will be fought to-morrow. It is the fear of battle, not the fear of God, which makes you shirk service." "If," answered Martin, "you take my resignation for cowardice and not for faithfulness, place me to-morrow alone and unarmed in the front of the battle. With nothing but the name of Christ and the sign of the Cross, I will press fearlessly into the ranks of the enemy." "Be it so," said Julian, and ordered Martin to be kept under custody till the following day.

But next day a very unexpected event occurred. At early dawn the Alamanni, who had seen the order and confidence of Julian's troops, sent an embassy with an offer of absolute and unconditional submission. Martin was released from his military oath, and at once went to place himself under the spiritual guidance of Hilary of Poictiers, of whose fame he had heard as the holiest and most orthodox of the Aquitanian bishops.

Hilary received the noble young Pannonian soldier with all the warmth of friendly hospitality, and after brief experience of his character and usefulness, was earnestly desirous to ordain him deacon, and so to

[1] Sulp. Sev. *Vit.* sec. 4: "Patere ut nunc militem Deo."

retain his services at Poictiers. But the invincible modesty of the youth was an obstacle which he could not overcome. Martin declared himself unworthy of the dignity, and could only be prevailed upon to accept the humbler and more laborious position of an exorcist, in which it was his painful and often perilous duty to undertake the care of the sick and of the lunatic.

But he had not been long in his new office when he was troubled by the thought that his parents were still heathen, and he was impressed even in his dreams by the sense of duty which urged him to make his way back to his home and to attempt their conversion. Hilary could not but give a reluctant assent to his wishes, but with many prayers and tears urged him to return. It was not without deep misgivings that Martin started on his lonely and dangerous journey.

It was in the autumn of 356 that he determined to make his way over the Cottian Alps and through the northern provinces of Italy. He frequently lost his way in those trackless mountain-wildernesses, and on one occasion fell into the hands of brigands. One of them had lifted his sword to cleave Martin's head, when a comrade, pitying his youth and willing to avert a useless murder, seized the assailant by his right hand. Martin had his hands tied behind his back, and was entrusted to the custody of the robber who had saved his life. "Who are you?" asked the robber. "I am a Christian," was the answer. A conversation ensued in which he was able to impress his captor with the elements of the faith. The robber set him free, and begged for his prayers. The story was told to Sulpicius Severus by one of the monks in Martin's Gallic monastery years afterwards. The narrator was the robber himself.

Martin made his way amid many trials and difficulties through Milan towards Venice. On his journey he met a man of hideous aspect who assailed him with a multitude of curious questions, especially asking him where he was going. "I purpose to go," said Martin, "wherever the Lord calls me." "Well," said his strange interlocutor in an angry voice, "wherever you go, and whatever you undertake, the Devil will always be your opponent." The conversation made a deep impression on the young man's vivid imagination, and took a thousand concrete forms in later years; but he only answered, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man can do unto me." The man left him, and disappeared. Sulpicius Severus believed that he was the Devil in human shape.

At last he reached his home, and to his great joy his parents were both living. His father, whose ambitious hopes for him were blighted by his abandonment of a career in the army, was displeased with him, and could not be won over to Christianity. But his mother was converted, as were many other inhabitants of his native town.

During the reign of Constantius, and under the powerful influence of his court bishops, the greater part of Pannonia had become Arian. Martin, as was natural in a pupil of Hilary, was an earnest champion of the Nicene faith, and his proceedings were highly distasteful to the bishops and clergy of Sabaria. His opposition to them was uncompromising, and, after many censures, he was finally beaten with rods and compelled to leave the town. It was about the year 358 that, finding it impossible to remain in his native town, he determined to return to Poictiers. But on his way he learnt that Hilary had been condemned by the Council of Beziers,

and sent by the Emperor into exile; and that Saturninus, the Metropolitan Bishop of Arles, had won over many adherents to Arianism. He determined therefore to stay at Milan, and there he built himself a hermit's cell. His condition at Milan soon became intolerable. Auxentius, the Arianising bishop who had been thrust by the Emperor into the place of the orthodox Dionysius, was compelled, as much as possible, to conceal his heresy under ambiguous terms; but Martin saw through his semblably orthodox language, and was too earnest a supporter of the faith to be left at peace. Auxentius subjected him to many forms of insult and persecution, and finally, in 359, succeeded in driving him from the city. Thus by the age of twenty-three Martin had twice been a confessor for the faith of Christ.

Accompanied by a single like-minded presbyter, he determined to become a hermit in the lonely and precipitous island of Gallinaria (now Galinara), not far from Albenga on the Riviera. From this island he passed to Capraria (Ægilon), north-east of Corsica, which was then infested to such an extent by serpents that the inhabitants of the coast regarded it as farther from them than Africa itself. There he lived on herbs with his companion, unharmed by the serpents. On one occasion he nearly poisoned himself by eating black hellebore, but was saved by prayer. He was drawn from his retreat by the news that Hilary had been permitted by Constantius to return home, and was on his way to his diocese. Martin went to Rome to seek for him, and Hilary went to Capraria to seek for Martin. They missed each other, but Martin followed Hilary, and found him at Poictiers.

He still declined to be ordained deacon or priest, because he desired above all things to be a monk.

Accordingly, in the spring of 361, he founded a monastery on a site given him by Hilary at a village place called Locociagum (Lugugé), about five miles from Poictiers. There had been some slight attempts at the monastic life in Italy, but this was practically the first monastery of the West. It was not till nearly forty years later (A.D. 404) that Jerome translated into Latin the monastic rules of Pachomius; but it is probable that in outline they had become widely known, for Pachomius had now been dead for thirteen years. The rule of Martin resembled in many respects that of Pachomius, but was inferior to it in placing less insistence on the duty of manual toil.

The ideal of monasticism, as we have seen so repeatedly in these biographies, was everywhere in the air. Friends and pupils rapidly gathered round the youthful saint, to learn from his example the lesson of what was looked upon as the only perfect life. Among these was a wealthy scholar named Sulpicius Severus, allied by marriage with a consular family, a man of talent and industry, and one of the most finished writers whom the Church produced. The early loss of his wife had disenchanted him from the allurements of the world, and he came to sit as a humble learner at the feet of the illiterate Martin, whose biographer he became. It was Martin who persuaded him to leave the world altogether, and to follow the example of the holy statesman Paulinus of Nola by adopting the ascetic life.[1]

One secret of the remarkable influence of Martin lay in the force, simplicity, and vividness of his teaching. He saw truth in the concrete, and it represented itself

[1] On Sulpicius Severus, see the admirable monograph of Jac. Bernays, *Ueber die Chronik des Sulpicius Severus.* Berlin, 1861.

to his mind in images and parables which he often enlivened with touches of irony and humour. The shorn sheep became an emblem of the man who has kept the command not to have two coats. The swineherd, half-naked and half-clad in skin, recalled to him the thought of Adam driven from Paradise. A meadow, partly trampled by swine, partly grazed down by cattle, partly bright with spring blossoms, seems to him an image of licentiousness, marriage, and virginity. He tried by these similitudes to imitate the Lord's method of teaching the multitude. A soldier, who had become a monk and placed his wife in a nunnery, wished to live with her again as a sister. Martin asked him whether soldiers usually took their wives into battle with them? All his thoughts, all his personal struggles, clothed themselves in the form of visions and images. He was as convinced as Luther himself of the visits and personal appearances of the Devil. He was constantly hearing his insults, and driving him away by the sign of the Cross from the statues of heathen gods. Once he heard the Devil taunting him with the assertion that some of his monks had fallen into mortal sin after baptism. "Old sins," he replied, in the hearing of some of his disciples, "are cleared away by repentance and conversion, and they who cease to sin shall be pardoned for their sins." "There is no mercy," replied the Evil One (adopting the false theology of the Montanists), "for those who fall after baptism into mortal sin." Whereon Martin cried aloud: "Even if thou, oh wretch, shouldst abstain from persecuting men, and even now, when the day of judgment is at hand, shouldst repent of thy wicked deeds, I would myself fearlessly promise thee compassion with perfect confidence in Christ." I do not suppose that Burns had ever read this anecdote of the saint,

but the thought which underlies it is precisely that of the celebrated lines—

> "But fare ye weel, auld Nickie-ben!
> Oh wad ye tak a thought and men'!
> Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
> Still hae a stake:
> I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
> E'en for your sake!"

No one, so far as I know, has charged Martin with heresy for making this promise to the Wicked One; yet Origen went very little further when he expressed that hypothetical belief in Satan's ultimate salvation for which he was so savagely condemned.

But though he saw the demons and their master constantly about him, he never showed the least fear. Nay, he openly challenged the Devil. "If thou hast any part in me," he said, "show it." He felt himself irresistible by the Name and Cross of Christ. Severus says that his method of exorcism was unique. Instead of whirling round him a hurricane of words ("sicut plerumque per clericos rotatur turbo verborum"), he ordered himself to be left with the possessed, and closing the doors of the church, lay on the ground covered with sackcloth and ashes and absorbed in prayer. Satan once tried to deceive him by assuming the form of an angel of light. He appeared to him in a blaze of glory, crowned with a diadem of gold and precious stones, and announced that he was Christ and that he was coming for his Second Advent, but wished first to reveal himself to Martin. The saint paused and made no answer. "Why dost thou hesitate to believe in the vision?" said the Evil One. "I am Christ." Then a gleam of Divine intuition flashed into the heart of Martin, and he said, "Jesus, my Lord, has not promised that He will return

in purple and glittering diadem. I will not believe that I see the Return of Christ until He come in the same form in which He suffered, and, above all, bears visibly the wounds which He suffered on the Cross." Then the deceitful vision disappeared, and Martin was left in his cell alone. This is one of the stories which Severus tells us that he heard from the lips of the saint himself.

Side by side with these demonic assaults, Martin believed himself to receive special inspiration of the Holy Spirit and visits of saints and angels. His imagination seems to have resembled that of the child-like and innocent English painter, William Blake, who *saw* all that he imagined, and was familiar with angels. One day Martin, sitting on a boat, was informed by an angel of what was taking place the same day in a synod at Nismes. On another occasion Severus and a brother-monk heard an animated conversation going on in the closed cell of their master for two hours. When Martin came out alone, Severus asked in astonishment, "Who has been with you?" The saint was at first unwilling to reply, but after a while he reluctantly said, "I will tell you, but do not tell any one else. Agnes, Thekla, and Mary have been with me," and he proceeded to describe their appearance. St. Peter and St. Paul were frequent visitors of his imagination, and he told these stories with all simplicity and sincerity. His disciples caught the infection of thus giving objectivity to their own impressions. They used to describe how once, when he was consecrating the eucharistic elements, they saw on his hands a blaze of gems, and heard them lightly clash together as he uplifted his right hand in benediction, and at other times they beheld a visible aureole around his brow.

Being what he was, it was natural that the life of

Martin should give rise to multitudes of legends, and be surrounded by a prodigality of miracles. Unauthorised stories of miracles belonged, so to speak, to the spirit of that age, and Martin, like Bernard of Clairvaux, was a man whose intense faith and commanding personality naturally led men to believe that he possessed superhuman powers. It is needless, and would be merely perplexing, to narrate all the wonders which are attributed to Martin. We are told in the course of his biography that when he set fire to a heathen temple, and the fire threatened a neighbouring building, the flames retired at his commands; how having escaped from a burning sacristy it occurred to him that this showed want of faith, and he returned, and was found uninjured in the midst of the conflagration; how a mad cow, between whose horns he saw a demon sitting, quietly returned to its herd at his bidding; how a pack of hounds at his word abstained from chasing a hare; how a mad dog ceased to howl when adjured by the name of Martin; how for many years he freed the neighbourhood of Sens from ruinous hailstorms; how he ordered an enormous snake to swim to the opposite bank, and it obeyed him; how oil was multiplied by his prayer; how he cleansed a leper with a kiss; how he healed the lame, the dumb, the blind, and the diseased; how he cast out devils; how he raised a catechumen and a heathen and a slave of Lupicinus from the dead. Some of these narratives are explicable by the exaggeration of natural circumstances; some by psychological considerations. Some belong to the dim borderland between the extraordinary and the supernatural; others are simply pictorial legends. They illustrate the beliefs and tendencies of that day, but most of them rest on no evidence whatever, and in the

case of those that do we have no power of estimating the quality of the testimony. We can only refer to them and leave them where they are, remembering that the deadly monotony and unnatural distortions of monastic asceticism could hardly have been maintained at all without the stimulus of miracles and of supernatural romance.

The immense and growing reputation of Martin rendered it certain that the people of some church would sooner or later claim him for a bishop. Some time about the year 373 died Litorius, who had succeeded Catianus as the second Bishop of Tours, the chief town of the Turones. Catianus had founded the Church in 249 during the Decian persecution. He remained bishop for fifty years, and then had followed a vacancy for thirty-seven years. Litorius built the only basilica which Tours possessed, and remained bishop for thirty-three years. On his death the bishop and clergy would have made some dull and commonplace choice, but the people demanded Martin, whose twelve years of monastic life had made him widely known. As it was certain that he would refuse the honour, he was lured out of his monastery at Lugugé by the "pious fraud" of a citizen named Ruricius, who flung himself at his feet and implored him to come and see his sick wife. Martin started, and was immediately surrounded by a number of Turonensian Christians, who practically took him prisoner, and conveyed him to their city. Some of the bishops disliked the choice. They did not wish to admit into their ranks a man with unkempt hair, of commonplace appearance, and clad in mean apparel.[1] Conspicu-

[1] Sulp. Sev. sec. 9: "Impie repugnabant, dicentes, scilicet, contemptibilem esse personam . . . hominem vultu despicabilem, veste sordidum, crine deformem."

ous among these opponents was a bishop named Defensor. His veto was broken down by a curious omen. The church was densely crowded by a mass of worshippers; the Eucharist was being celebrated, and it was the duty of the Reader to read the Epistle and Gospel. He had, however, arrived at the church rather late, and was unable to make his way to the communion table through the press, and, to fill up the time, one of the congregation took up a psalter, and not knowing what was the Epistle for the day, began to read the eighth psalm. When he reached the second verse, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger" ("ut destruas inimicum et *defensorem*"[1]—the people with a shout of joy applied the words to the Bishop Defensor, the opposition was broken down, and Martin was consecrated.

His chief activity was devoted to the conversion of the heathen, and many stories are told of the dauntless and wonder-working power with which he destroyed their temples, dashed down their images, hewed down their sacred trees, and hushed all opposition by the awe and terrors which he inspired. Wherever he destroyed temples, says Gregory of Tours, he built churches or monasteries, and such was the success of his missionary work that the narrow limits of a diocese which at first consisted of his single church at Tours, were extended to Langeais, Sonnay, Amboise, Tournon, and other places, and beyond the boundaries of the Turones to the suffragan-bishoprics of Nantes, Rennes, Mans, Vannes, and Angers, and even perhaps as far as St. Malo.

[1] The last words are rendered in the old Latin version, which was used at Tours, "et Defensorem ejus."

He could not, however, bear to abandon the monastic life which was so dear to him. At first he lived in a cell adjoining the church, and then, disliking the press of a town life, he established a monastery in a lonely spot, shut in by rocks and by the river Loire, about two miles from the town. The retreat was only accessible by a single approach. Here he built himself a little wooden hut, and other monks gathered around him at this Majus Monasterium (Marmoutier) to the number of about eighty. The site of the monastery was a place encircled by hills on the banks of the Loire. The monks lived in huts like his own, or in caves hollowed out of the rock, and they accepted his rule. They had all things in common. No buying or selling was permitted, and every form of industry was discouraged except the copying out of manuscripts, which was left to the young. The elders were to devote themselves exclusively to prayer, rarely leaving their cells except for the common service. They never drank wine unless they were ill, and had but one meal a day, consisting generally of bread, vegetables, and olives. They lived in absolute obedience, and for the most part in silence. Their dress was of camel's hair, and a softer robe was regarded as a crime, though many of the monks were of noble birth and high attainments. The monastery, we are told, became a training-school of bishops. It needed no rich donations, and once when Martin received a present of 200 pounds of silver in gratitude for a miraculous healing, he devoted it to the ransom of captives. When his friends remonstrated, he said, "Let the Church clothe and feed us, so long as we seem to have sought nothing for our own needs." Severus dwells at great length on the practices of this strange community, and from his description we see that there

prevailed among the monks a sadly unwholesome emulation in self-tortures, in visions, and in miracles.

We read with sorrow the story of their fantastic self-maceration. It shows the danger and the evil of a false ideal, even when it is followed with perfect sincerity. Had Martin and his monks learnt from St. Paul how trivial is the value of bodily exercise, how futile the efficacy of self-sought and self-inflicted anguish,[1] they would not have set the fatal example of practices which deprave and distort the body and the soul which God created for a purer and simpler blessedness. The monks of Martin were swept away by the tide of triumphant superstition, and helped to swell its overwhelming volume. The biography of the saint became the most popular book of the day. At Rome the booksellers made fortunes by it, and amanuenses could not copy it fast enough for the demand. In Africa, alike among the monks of the desert and in great cities like Carthage, it was in all men's hands; and at Alexandria, so the author himself tells us, nearly all the people had it by heart.[2] The miracles in which it abounded constituted its chief charm for the multitude of readers, and they were so lavishly supplied as to include no less than three instances of raising men from the dead. The monks of Marmoutier urged Severus not to omit the narrative of even one prodigy, although he admits that some of them were too absurd even for their strong credulity. "May the opinion never prevail in the Church of Christ," wrote Julius Africanus, "that any false thing can be fabricated for Christ's glory."[3] Most, if not all, of the so-called

[1] See 1 Tim. iv. 8, Col. ii. 20-23, and Bishop Lightfoot's note on this passage.

[2] *Dial.* i. 15, 16. My references are to the Amsterdam Elzevir edition, 1665.

[3] *Ad Aristid.* 1.

miracles which were supposed to surround Martin with a blaze of glory were either absolutely and on the face of them false; or were gross exaggerations of natural events; or were subjective impressions clothed in objective images; or were the distortions of credulous rumour; or at the best cannot claim in their favour a single particle of trustworthy evidence.[1] They cannot be narrated as though they were actual events. Martin was an eminent bishop, but half of the wonderful deeds attributed to him are unworthy and absurd. Far more interesting than these crowded marvels are the narratives of Martin's intercourse with great and imperial personages, which in their general outline are undoubtedly historical. To his own clergy, and to all about him, the Bishop of Tours was, as we shall see, most gentle and forbearing; but towards rulers he adopted in some instances a tone of superiority which was hardly consistent with Christian meekness, though it helped to establish an ascendency used for noble ends.

During the earlier years of his episcopate, which lasted from A.D. 371 to 396, Tours was terrified by the visit of the fierce Count Avitian,[2] who possessed a sort of viceregal authority, and whom Sulpicius compares to a raging wild beast. His retinue was followed by a long line of prisoners whose execution was destined to strike terror into the city. Determined to intercede for them and for his episcopal city, Martin made his way at midnight to the palace doors. That night the

[1] The first episcopal miracle which Severus (*Vit.* sec. 11) relates of him is that he compelled the ghost of a murderer to confess that *he* was the supposed martyr at whose altar the people were worshipping. The student who wishes to read these stories will find them abundantly in Sulpicius Severus and Gregory of Tours, *De Miraculis Martini.*

[2] Perhaps *Comes largitionum per Gallias.—Dial.* 1, 5.

Count's uneasy slumber was suddenly startled by what seemed to him to be a violent push, while a voice said to him, "Thou slumberest here, while the servant of God is lying outside before thy threshold." His servants, after a careless glance at the door, persuaded him that this was a mere fancy, and he composed himself to sleep. But he again started up with the cry, "Martin is standing at the gate." The servants then found that this was indeed the case, and the bishop was brought before the Count. "Why have you acted thus?" asked Avitian, "I know your wish before you utter it. Go, and do not let heaven's wrath destroy me." Terrified by his conscience, he set the prisoners free and left the city.[1] On the occasion of Avitian's later visit to Tours, Martin, who recognised that there were still some elements of good in this wild transgressor, entered his cabinet and looked steadfastly at him. "Why do you stare thus at me, holy man?" asked the Count. "I was not staring at you," answered Martin, "but at the hideous demon who is sitting upon your neck." The reproof had a good effect upon the subsequent character of the cruel Count.

The Emperor Valentinian I., who succeeded Jovian A.D. 364, hearing of Martin's fame from all sides, would gladly have entered into friendly relations with him. Valentinian was not an Arian like his brother Valens, yet his Empress, Justina, was an Arian, and his relation with Hilary and the bishops of Gaul was unsatisfactory. Thinking, however, that his influence might be salutary, Martin went to Trèves, where, in 368, the Emperor was holding his court. But Valentinian, who

[1] *Dial.* iii. 8. Sulpicius declares (ed. 5) that he stated nothing but what he had seen or heard on credible authority, "vel plerumque ipso referente."

had resolved to make no concessions, gave orders that he was not to be admitted to the palace. Martin betook himself to prayer and fasting, and on the seventh day, believing that he had received a divine intimation, he went to the palace, and made his way unchallenged into the Emperor's presence. The Emperor marked his approach with anger, being indignant at the negligence of his guards; but feeling as if his chair had taken fire,[1] he was compelled to rise, and yielding to the impulse of the moment, received the saint with a warm embrace. He promised him all that he required, kept him as his guest, and at his departure wished to load him with gifts, which the bishop, "ever a guardian of his own poverty," courteously declined to accept.[2]

We shall read in the Life of Ambrose the series of tragedies which ended in the murder of Valentinian's son Gratian and the usurpation of Maximus. It was a matter of extreme importance to Maximus to secure the adhesion of the clergy, and above all, if possible, of a bishop so beloved and famous as the Bishop of Tours. The usurper's intervention in the unhappy affair of the Priscillianists was due in part to the greed of confiscation and in part to a desire to meddle in the affairs of Spain, the native land of his rival Theodosius; but no doubt it was also intended to serve as a proof of his orthodoxy. Priscillian, from whose recently-discovered work we should derive a most favourable opinion as to his piety and orthodoxy, was accused of heresy, of magic, and (as a matter of course) of immorality.[3] We can form no

[1] "Donec regiam sellam ignis operiret, ipsumque regem ea parte corporis, qua sedebat, afflaret incendium." [2] *Dial.* i. 6.

[3] Sulpicius Severus charges Priscillian, and his friends the Bishops Instantius and Salvian, with going to Rome, "turpi sane pudibundoque comitatu, cum uxoribus atque alienis etiam feminis." If this was turned to their prejudice, Damasus might have remembered that *he* too lay for years

judgment as to the truth of the charges, for we know but little of them at first hand, and the whole of Church history abounds in proofs that we can never trust the accounts given either of the opinions or characters of men by their theological opponents.[1] The two most implacable enemies of Priscillian, the Spanish Bishops Ithacius of Ossonoba (Estombar) and Idatius of Emerita (Merida), are not described to us in prepossessing colours.[2] They invoked the interference of the civil power, and in 384 Maximus summoned the Synod of Bordeaux to decide the cause. The accusations here brought against the Priscillianists were not of a doctrinal character, but turned on the vague suspicion of sorcery, and on points of morals. They were condemned. Priscillian, who had been consecrated Bishop of Avila, appealed to the Emperor.[3] The cause was again heard in the imperial consistory; and Priscillian, with four of his chief followers—Felicissimus, Armenius, the poet Latronianus, and Euchrotia the wealthy widow of the poet and orator Delphidius—were again condemned, and all five were beheaded at Trèves in 385. Their supporter, the Spanish bishop Instantius, was banished to the Scilly Isles.

under a false charge of adultery, and Jerome (who jeers at these *mulierculae*), that he was himself driven from Rome by similar charges. As for travelling with women, might not Priscillian and his friends have quoted 1 Cor. ix. 5 ?

[1] Pope Damasus (a Spaniard, and perhaps prejudiced against them beforehand,) and St. Ambrose seem to have condemned them unheard (adversantem reppererunt, Sulp. Sev.) We cannot judge of their reasons for this conduct, but the charge of "sorcery" (which was urged against Priscillian) excited the utmost terror.

[2] Of the chief persecutor, Ithacius, Sulp. Severus (*Chron.* ii. 50) says that he cared nothing for anything holy, "fuit enim audax, loquax, impudens, sumptuosus, ventri et gulae plurimum impertiens."

[3] As the charges were criminal, not dogmatic, he had a perfect right to do so. See on the whole story Sulp. Severus, *Sacr. Hist.* ii. 61-66.

A cry of horror rose from the Church, for so far from having dyed her garments red in the blood of heretics and defiled them with their ashes, never up to this time had she directly or indirectly stained herself with the guilt of putting men to death for their religious opinions. With the reputed opinions of Priscillian, whatever they may have really been, neither Martin nor Pope Siricius, the successor of Damasus, nor Ambrose, had the least sympathy, yet they shared the indignation aroused by their execution. The noble and unfortunate Bishop of Avila had been originally accused of "Gnosticism," the later accusations were apparently the after-thoughts of religious hatred. In 392, seven years after the execution of Priscillian, and while his sect was still vigorous, Jerome[1] speaks very doubtfully of his supposed heresies. He only says that by *some* he was accused of holding the opinions of Basilides, "while others say in his defence that his opinions had been misunderstood."[2] Sulpicius Severus, in his *Chronicon* (A.D. 400), says that he and his fellow-sufferers were honoured in Spain as martyrs, and that it became a solemn oath to swear by Priscillian. Writing still earlier (in 389), Drepanius Pacatus, in his Panegyric of Theodosius, mentions with horror the execution of Euchrotia (*clari vatis matrona*), and her being dragged to the block by a hook, and says that the charge against her was an excess of superstitious zeal—"*nimia religio et diligentius culta divinitas!*"[3] So far as we can judge, with the newly-discovered eleven pamphlets of Priscillian to help us, the head and point of their religious offence was the

[1] *De. Virr. ill.* 21.

[2] "Defendentibus aliis non ita eum sensisse ut arguitur."

[3] *Paneg. Lat.* (ed. Bährens, 1874), p. 297. I take these references from Dr. Schepps's edition of a recently discovered MS. of a work of Priscillian. Würzburg, 1886.

holding of some independent views on the canon of Scripture, on demons, and on the riddle of human life.[1]

In point of fact the moral charges brought against the Priscillianists contradict each other; on the one hand they are accused of immorality, on the other of vegetarianism, opposition to marriage, and excess of strictness. Priscillian speaks strongly about the value of fasting and meditation, and cries earnestly for truth, light, and freedom of soul. These views would be peculiarly displeasing to a worldly *bon-vivant* like the Bishop of Ossonoba, and (as Bernays points out) would be a point of union between the Priscillianists and Martin.[2] Martin was moved with sympathy as well as with pity, for he and his monks practised the very same austerities which were looked upon with suspicion in Priscillian and his followers. Nay, Ithacius went to such a pitch of audacity as to charge Martin himself with heretical leanings.

But so great was the fame and influence of Martin that the execution was postponed until his duties compelled him to leave Trèves. Then the Spanish bishops prevailed over the mind of Maximus, and for the first time the axe of the executioner was reddened with the blood of Christians, shed by Christians to avenge a difference of opinion. That bloodshed, like the beginning of sin, was indeed as the letting out of water, and the crimson stream was destined in after ages to roll for many a furlong, bridle deep.[3]

[1] As to the canon of Scripture, Priscillian (Tr. iii.) complains that at the Synod of Caesaraugusta (Saragossa) Idatius contented himself with saying, "Damnanda damnentur, superflua non legantur"; on which he remarks, "*furor imperitus,* nihil aliud dicens, nisi sint catholica necne quae dicis *damna quae ego nescio! damna quod ego non lego! damna quod studio pigriscentis otii non requiro!*"

[2] Bernays *ad Chron. Sulp. Severi,* 5.

[3] Rev. xiv. 20.

When fresh acts of cruel persecution were threatened, Martin hurried back to Trèves (A.D. 387) in alarm and haste. The Bishop of Trèves had died, and a worthy successor, Felix, had been chosen in his place. The Ithacian party were to consecrate him, although they were condemned by Pope Siricius, by Ambrose, and by a minority even of the Gallic bishops headed by the fearless Theognostus. The news that Martin was coming excited great alarm. The bishops wished him to be forbidden to enter the city. A messenger was sent to meet him, and ask him his intentions, "I shall come," he said, "with the peace of Christ." On his arrival he earnestly implored Maximus to spare the Priscillianists, and also some officers of Gratian who had been condemned to death. His appeal was rejected, except on the one condition that he would communicate with the Ithacians and join in the consecration of Felix. He refused, and left the palace in anger. But while he was praying in the night the news reached him that the messengers of blood had been dispatched to Spain. In deep agitation he rushed back to the palace and promised to join in the consecration the next day and to receive the communion with Ithacius and Idatius. On this promise the fatal letters of persecution were recalled. Martin joined the Spanish bishops in the church, but hung back from signing the act of consecration. Ambrose refused to condone the crime of the Spaniards in 387, though he knew that his refusal foredoomed to failure his appeal to Maximus to restore the body of Gratian. But in Martin's case the lives of many men were at stake. To Felix himself there was no objection. If Martin erred, certainly his failing leaned to virtue's side, and he may perhaps have thought it necessary to give public proof that, though he was

indignant at the execution of the Priscillianists, neither he nor his monks had any sympathy with heresy. He left Trèves next day with bitter feelings of doubt and remorse. In the lonely forest, not far from Echternach, he sent his companion forward, while he sat down to think over the matter once more, and he imagined that an angel stood by him and told him that he did right to mourn, but that he could not have found any other way to save the threatened Churches in Spain. He bade him, however, be more careful in future. From that time, during the sixteen remaining years of his life,[1] Martin would never have anything to do with any assembly of bishops, and from that time he dated an imaginary diminution of his supernatural powers.

Martin seems to have seen in the Emperor Maximus some redeemable characteristics.[2] When first invited to his table, he had replied with singular boldness: "I cannot sit at the table of one who has robbed one Emperor (Gratian) of his life, and another (Valentinian II.) of his throne"; and he warned Maximus that, though he might be successful at first, his time would be short. But the pleas of the Emperor in his own defence had some weight, and at last Martin consented to dine with him. He was placed in a seat of conspicuous honour, while his attendant chaplain was seated between the brother and the uncle of the Emperor. During the feast a great goblet was brought to the Emperor, and before tasting it he ordered it to be handed to Martin, hoping to receive it again from his hand. But when

[1] Reading *sedecim* for *undecim* (with Fynes Clinton) in Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* iii. 15.

[2] As does his biographer, who thinks that the usurpation was forced on him. We must not accept the furious denunciations of Pacatus in the Panegyric which he pronounced before Theodosius.

Martin had tasted it he handed it, not to the Emperor, but to his own chaplain, as though a priest were a person of higher rank than even a crowned head. The Empress, a devout woman, obtained her husband's leave to entertain him alone. She prepared the banquet with her own hands, waited on him herself, sat at his feet, mingled and handed to him his wine, and at the end of the feast gathered all the crumbs and fragments and made her own meal of them. Martin acquiesced in these proceedings. We read of similar self-assertion of sacred dignity among the Rabbis in the days of the Asmonean princes, and they have been common among the Popes of Rome; but they have been rejected and condemned by the right feeling and common sense of the Christian world. The supposed principle by which they are justified could never be anything but a fatal temptation to sacerdotal arrogance and an excuse for tyranny over the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free.[1]

But in Martin the error was innocent. He was untainted by the vulgar haughtiness of the ordinary ambitious ecclesiastic. He was full of pity and gentleness, and tried to form kind judgments of men. While he had an unscriptural and exaggerated estimate of the chasm which separated the clergy from the laity, he separated this dignity from his own personal claims. Even in his own church he did not sit enthroned in state and splendour, but on a humble three-legged stool, such as was in use among the peasants of his

[1] The only thing which strikes Severus is that Martin should allow *a woman*, "semel tantum in vita suâ," to come so near him. He praises a nun who would not allow Martin even to see her because he was a man! *Dial.* ii. 7. Such nonsense shows the perilous development of a Manichean pseudo-sanctity, id. 13. How much wiser and better was the view of St. Hugo of Avalon!

country. He never resented a personal indignity. Among the clergy in his monastery was a young man named Brictio, who had been born in humble circumstances, but whom Martin had befriended and ultimately raised to the dignity of a deacon. He was a youth of worldly mind and ungovernable temper. One day, on the road between Tours and Marmoutier, he met a sick man who asked him where he could find Martin. "Are you looking for that old humbug?" said Brictio. "See he is over there, staring up into the sky like a fool." The sick man found Martin and was relieved, and Martin meeting Brictio asked him, "Why should you call me a humbug?" "I never called you so," answered the deacon. "Was not my ear at your mouth?" answered the bishop, "though you spoke behind my back? You too, when I die, shall become a bishop, and shall have much to suffer." Seeing Martin so calm, Brictio only laughed and said, "Did I not say that the old man was a humbug?" After this Brictio seems to have been liable to bursts of madness, and one day when Martin was seated on his stool before his cell, he saw Brictio rush out and overwhelm him with a storm of abuse, while to his fancy two demons seated on the rocks above seemed to be goading him on. "I am holier than you," said the deacon; "I have been bred in a monastery, but you were once a soldier." The brethren of the monastery demanded that the young man should suffer an exemplary punishment, but Martin bore with him calmly, and when Brictio, moved by his gentleness, had thrown himself at his feet in an agony of remorse, the bishop only said to his monks, "Brictio has only injured himself, not me. Christ had patience with Judas, should not I have patience with him?" Martin's prophecy was afterwards fulfilled; Brictio became Bishop

of Tours. But after thirty-three years he was driven out of the city by the people in shame and sorrow under a lying accusation, and only after seven years of bitter exile was he restored to his bishopric, where he died at last in peace.[1]

Such gentleness as Martin's made even the heathen love him. He had scarcely any enemies, but they, as Sulpicius Severus sorrowfully confesses, were almost exclusively bishops. His heart was chiefly in his monastic cell, and among the monks whom he had assembled round him. He was not a writer.[2] One work—a confession of faith—is assigned to his authorship, but its genuineness has been disproved. He took no active part in the theological controversies of his day. His fame rests chiefly on the impulse which he gave to monasticism in the West, on the miracles attributed to him and greedily accepted by the superstition of his age, and on the deep impression created by the beauty of his personal character. He saw constant visions. St. Peter and St. Paul were his frequent visitants. The demons often annoyed him, and he rebuked them by name. Mercury gave him special trouble; he described Jupiter as dull and brutish. Such fancies, as he narrated them, are no more startling in his life than in those of Emanuel Swedenborg or William Blake. There were some even of his own monks who attached little or no importance to them. Brictio in his fury taunted him with the fact that he had grown old, "per inanes superstitiones, et fastasmata visionum ridicula prorsus inter deliramenta."[3]

Towards the close of his life he heard that a violent quarrel had sprung up among the clergy of Caudes, and

[1] Greg. Turon. *Hist.* ii. 1, x. 31.

[2] The "Trinae unitatis et unius trinitatis confessio" is confessedly spurious. It is printed in Gallandi, *Bibl. Patr.* vii. 599.

[3] *Dial.* ii. 20.

he thought it his duty to go and bring about a reconciliation between the contending parties. Summoning his monks together, he warned them of his approaching end, and set out, amidst their tears and lamentations. At Caudes he was seized with a violent fever, and feeling that the end was near, ordered his disciples to lay him on the ground in sackcloth and ashes, for so, he said, a Christian ought to die—"*non decet Christianum nisi in cinere mori.*" As he lay there he thought he saw the Devil near him. "Why standest thou here, horrible beast?" he said. "Thou hast no share in me. Abraham's bosom is receiving me."[1] These were his last words, and the brethren who surrounded him were surprised by the brightness and beauty of his countenance as he lay in death. He died at midnight in perfect peace at a good old age. The date of his death was probably A.D. 401.[2] Two thousand monks and a choir of virgins conducted his corpse to Tours, and succeeded in escorting it in safety, though they greatly dreaded lest it should be rent from them forcibly by the people of Poictiers. Bishop Perpetuus built a splendid basilica over his grave. From that time onwards his fame, which was spread far and wide by the literary skill of his friend and pupil Sulpicius Severus, has gone on increasing. The story of his cloak has provided art with a favourite subject, and the familiar phrases "Martinmas" (Nov. 11) and "St. Martin's summer" yearly recall to us the day which was set apart in celebration of his memory. He was selected in the tenth century as

[1] Luther admired this story. "Solch Ding," he says, "sollt man aus den Legenden der Helligen klauben, und nicht allerlei Narrenwerk" (Tischreden, iv. 273).

[2] Or, according to Fynes Clinton, A.D. 379. But the exact dates of Martin's life are far from certain. Gregory of Tours (*De Mir.* i. 3) says that he died "*octagesimo primo aetatis suae anno.*"

the patron saint of Norway; he is highly honoured in Mainz, Würzburg, and in France; and to him are dedicated some of our own most ancient churches. His hood (*capa*) was one of the chief treasures of the French kings, and used to be carried with them to battle.[1]

His goodness surrounds his name with purer glory than any which he could have gained by intellectual qualities. He was always praying, even when he seemed to be otherwise engaged. "O man truly blessed," says his biographer, "in whom there was no guile; judging no man, condemning no man, returning to no man evil for evil. So patient was he under all injuries, that even when he was a bishop he was with impunity injured by the lowest of the clergy; nor did he ever depose them for the wrongs they did him, nor even, so far as lay in himself, repel them from his affection. No one ever saw him angry, or disturbed, or grieving, or laughing. He was always one and the same, and seemed something beyond mortal, wearing on his countenance a sort of celestial joy. Never was anything on his lips but Christ, never anything in his heart but piety, peace, and pity. Often did he weep for the sins even of those his detractors, who when he was quiet and absent attacked him with viperous lips and poisoned tongues. Many hated him for virtues which they did not possess and could not imitate, and alas! his bitterest assailants were bishops. If any one of them reads this and recognises the fact, let him blush."[2] Martin, he says, was known from the Fortunate Isles to the sea of ice; all glorified him, except some of his neighbours. "Only

[1] Herzog, ix. 373. (The article is by Weingarten.) Ducange (s. v. *capa*, *capella*) says that the word "chapel" is derived from this *capa*. He quotes Monach. Sangall. 1; *De Vita Caroli Magni;* Honorius, *Gemma animae*, ch. 128, and other authorities.

[2] *Vit. ad fin.*

clerics, only priests knew him not, and would not know him out of envy, for had they known his virtues they would have recognised their own vices."[1]

It is impossible not to draw a parallel between St. Martin and the celebrated Curé d'Ars. Both were ignorant men, but men of consummate holiness. Both were strict ascetics, and absolutely alien from the spirit and temper of the world. Both were assailed by visions of devils, and comforted with heavenly revelations. Both lived in extreme poverty and seclusion, except so far as concerned their public ministrations. Both were despised by the clergy and adored by the people. Both accepted with absolute humility the sneers and criticisms of the learned. Both were surrounded with a halo of miracles. But Martin is incomparably the more eminent of the two. He was the overthrower of idolatry in a great part of Gaul, and one of the principal founders of the monasteries of the West.[2]

[1] *Dial.* i. 18.

[2] St. Martin has been often represented in painting. The most famous subject from his life is "La Charité de St. Martin," of which the best known picture is that by Vandyck. See Mrs. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, pp. 724-728.

XII

ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS[1]

"Σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς καὶ φρέαρ βαθύ· λέγω δὲ τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ στόμα Γρηγόριον."—Basil, *Ep.* viii.

SECTION I

HIS EDUCATION AND YOUTH

Nazianzus derives its glory solely from its connexion with the eloquent Father to whom it gives its name, and who alone of all Christians since the death of St. John has been honoured with the title of "The Theologian." It was a small town in the south-west of Cappadocia, and is now a ruin in a barren country full of stone-quarries. Gregory alludes to it as "the least

[1] Among the editions and lives of St. Gregory of Nazianzus may be mentioned; *S. Patris Gregorii Theologi opera, operâ et studio Monachorum ordinis S. Benedicti I.* (Paris, 1778, 1842); *S. Gregorii Naz. Theol. Opera*, J. B. Prunaeus (Lips. 1690); Gregorius Presbyter, *Vita Gregorii Nazianzeni;* Fabricius, *Bibl. Graeca*, viii. 383 *sqq.* 399 *sqq.*; Tillemont, *Memoires pour servir à l'hist. eccl.* ix. 305-460; C. Ullmann, *Gregorius von Nazianz. der Theologe*, 2 Ausg. (Gotha, 1867); Abbé Benoît, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Paris, 1876); *Die Alte Kirche*, Achter Theil, *Das Vierte Jahrhundert*, F. and P. Böhringer, 2te Ausgabe (Stuttgart, 1876); Godf. Hermant, *La Vie de S. Basile le Grand et celle de S. Gregoire de Nazianze* (Paris, 1879). We may also mention De Broglie, *L'Église et l'Em-*

among cities,"[1] "not even a city at all, but a dry and unpleasing habitation, with only a few inhabitants,"[2] and once again as "the little state of the Diocaesareans." Diocaesarea seems to have been the name by which it was known to the Romans.

Cappadocia had been governed by its own kings until the royal family became extinct B.C. 92. The Romans then offered them their liberty, but, to the scorn of the ancients, they preferred to be under a king.[3] They chose Ariobarzanes I., and continued under a monarchy till A.D. 17, when Tiberius made Cappadocia a Roman province.

A Cappadocian had little cause to be proud of his country. It was chiefly famous for its slaves.[4] It ranked as one of "the three very bad K's"—Crete, Cappadocia, and Caria.[5] In the Greek anthology there is an epigram which says that "a viper bit a Cappadocian, and—the viper died." Isidore of Pelusium, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century, speaks of the Cappadocians as a race "deceptive and wicked, not delighting in peace, but nurtured by discord; tricky, shameless, bold, cowardly, satirical, ignoble, treacherous, churlish, contemptuous, keen for lies, and swift to perjury."[6] The tyranny of the wealthy priests of Comana

pire; Fialon, *Les Pères de l'Église Grecque* (Paris, 1882); Villemain, *Tableau de l'éloquence chrétienne au IV^e Siècle* (Paris, 1881); Newman, *Church of the Fathers;* Montant, *Rev. critique de quelques questions historiques.*

All the references are to the works of Gregory in the Benedictine edition, 1840, reprinted at Paris, 1842.

[1] *Orat.* xix. 11. [2] *Orat.* xxxiii. 6.

[3] Strabo, xii. 1; Justin, xxxvi. 2.

[4] Hor. *Epp.* i. 6; Pers. *Sat.* vi. 77.

[5] Κρῆτες, Καππάδοκες, Κᾶρες, *τρία κάππα κάκιστα* (Erasmus, *Adagia*).

[6] Isid. Pel. *Ep.* 281. In another letter, however, he speaks of a part of Cappadocia as *πανάριστος*, and alludes to the "torch-bearers" which it had produced. *Ep.* 158.

reduced the mass of the inhabitants to a life of slavery and agricultural toil, which did not, however, overcome their propensity to avarice and licentiousness.[1] Gregory's own allusions to his countrymen are far from flattering, and he finds reason to complain both of their turbulence and their caprice. It seems, however, to be the characteristic of some nations to produce at once the very best and the very worst specimens of humanity. Gregory loved his country. He boasts of its fine breed of horses, its noble youths, its faithful orthodoxy. It produced Pausanias, the rhetorician of Caesarea; and Apollonius of Tyana, the sophist and thaumaturge; as well as the three Fathers of the fourth century—Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, and Gregory of Nyssa, who were prominent for influence, eloquence, and theological profundity, and are usually known as "the three great Cappadocians."[2]

Certainly if there were many homes in Cappadocia like those of Basil and Gregory—if there were many families which could boast such mothers as Emmelia and Nonna, such daughters as Macrina and Gorgonia, such pairs of brothers as Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, Caesarius and Gregory of Nazianzus—it must have been a country which might well inspire patriotism.

The father of Gregory bore the same name as himself. He was a man of honourable lineage and considerable wealth, who had an estate in the neighbouring village of Arianzus. He came of a Christian family, but had joined an obscure and curious sect of "illuminated theists," known as Hypsistarians, of whom we

[1] Isid. Pel. *Ep.* 487.

[2] *Orat.* xliii. 3, 33. In *Orat.* xxi. 14, he says, ἡ μὲν (πατρίς) ἱερά τε καὶ πᾶσιν ἐπ' εὐσεβείᾳ γνωριμός.

know nothing except from a single passage in the writings of each of the Gregories.[1] They worshipped God as "the Highest" (ὕψιστος), and from this they derived their name, but they mixed their Christianity with Persian and Jewish elements. While rejecting idols and sacrifices, they worshipped God under the symbols of light and fire. They kept holy the seventh day instead of the first, and adopted Jewish rules about clean and unclean meats. As far as holiness of life was concerned, the elder Gregory was blameless; but his wife, Nonna, who was a deeply earnest Christian, was naturally grieved by his adoption of heretical practices, and used her whole influence to bring about his conversion. She was successful, and her efforts were aided by a dream. Gregory dreamt that he sang the first verse of the 122d psalm, "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord." He therefore yielded to Nonna's urgency that he would accompany her to the Christian Church, and soon learnt to accept its teachings. Leontius of Caesarea, and other bishops, who were on their way to the Council of Nice, happened about that time (325) to be passing through Nazianzus, and at their hands he received baptism. It was thought a happy omen that while the other catechumens stood to be baptized, he kneeled upon his knees. Some of the spectators fancied that as he rose from the water they saw an aureole round his head, and the Bishop of Nazianzus ventured to make the not too hazardous prophecy that Gregory would be his successor.[2]

[1] Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xvii. 5; Greg. Nyss. *c. Eunom.* ii. The Hypsistarians seem to have resembled the Euphemites mentioned by Epiphanius, *Haer.* 80.

[2] *Orat.* xviii. 13; ἐξελθόντα αὐτόν ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος φῶς περιαστράπτει.

After an interval the elder Gregory was ordained priest, and soon (about 329) became bishop of his native town.[1] He was then fifty years old. Of theology he knew but little, though he took what pains he could to make up for his deficiencies. His predecessor seemed to have been somewhat lax, and the diocese had suffered in consequence. But the rule of Gregory was firm yet gentle. He was an earnest opponent of Arianism and other heresies, and watched with zealous solicitude over the welfare of his flock. The Church of Nazianzus became "like the ark in the deluge." His son dwells lovingly on the calm exterior which covered the fiery heart of his father; his loftiness of spirit, his patience and uprightness, his unostentatious charities, his piety, which was free from every taint of Pharisaism. Honoured by his flock and the people of his town, he continued for forty-five years the functions of priest and bishop, and reached the great age of nearly a hundred years. Among other services to Nazianzus he built a church there mainly at his own expense.[2]

Nonna, his wife, was even more remarkable for the strength and beauty of her character, and she it was who had the greatest share in moulding the spirit of her son. She had been carefully brought up by Christian parents, and in the faithful fulfilment of her domestic duties recalled Solomon's picture of the wise woman. Obedient to her husband in all due subjection, she yet became his guide and teacher. Her devotion to all religious observances involved no neglect of her household duties. When she was engaged in holy services no one would have thought she had a single earthly care; when she

He seems to have been persecuted by his mother for leaving the Hypsistarians, and even for a time to have been driven from home. *Orat.* xviii. 5. [1] See *Orat.* xviii. 13. [2] *Orat.* i. 6; xviii. 39.

was occupied with household work no one would have guessed her profound piety. She was in all things thorough, and whatever she did she did it with her might. She had been taught by the experience of life to place an unconditional belief in the efficacy of faithful prayer, in which she sought refuge from every trial. She placed God first in all her thoughts. She combined the intensity of the contemplative with the strenuousness of the practical life; and such was her love of almsgiving that she often used to say that if need were she could sell even herself and her children into slavery to provide money for the poor. All these traits are derived from the loving description given of her by her son in his eighteenth oration. From the particulars which he adds we can see that Nonna's beautiful zeal and piety were a little defaced by formalism and intolerance. Among other curious particulars, Gregory thinks it worth while to mention that she never allowed herself to spit in church. She never turned her back on the holy table. She would never kiss or shake hands with a heathen woman; and not even force would induce her to eat salt with those who came from heathen feasts. She would never enter a theatre, and would not so much as look at heathen temples. Gregory all through his life regarded her memory with the deepest affection. What Anthusa was to Chrysostom, and Monica to Augustine, that Nonna was to the great Cappadocian; and having been thus fortunate in his parents, he loved to compare them to Abraham and Sarah.

Gregory of Nazianzus was born about the year 330,[1]

[1] The exact year cannot be settled, but we get this approximate date from *Carm.* xi. 238, 512. It does not seem worth while to enter into the elaborate arguments invented to explain away the inference directly suggested by these passages, that Gregory and Caesarius were born after their father was a bishop. There is a dissertation on the question by Stelling

five years after his father's baptism. Nonna had wished for a boy, and vowed that if a son were born to her she would devote him to God; in other words, have him trained to be a presbyter. When her prayer was fulfilled she took the child in her arms to the church, and consecrated his little hands by laying them on the sacred book. Gregory compares her to Hannah giving Samuel to the Lord at Shiloh.[1]

He was carefully taught the doctrines of the faith, and from a child was made familiar with the Holy Scriptures. Thoughtful and studious by nature, he readily caught the influences which were brought to bear upon him, and devoted himself to a virgin life. In this purpose he was confirmed by a beautiful dream. There came to him in his sleep two lovely maidens of equal age and equal beauty, clothed in long white robes, and covered with veils which shadowed but did not conceal the brightness of their eyes and the blush of modesty upon their cheeks. They approached the sleeping boy with looks of kindness, and when he asked their names, told him that they were Purity and Chastity, companions of Jesus, and friends of all who gave up earthly ties in order to devote themselves to lives of perfect godliness. They bade him to bind his spirit with theirs, and then vanished heavenwards. But though he never swerved from this purpose of celibacy, he is never guilty of the extravagant depreciations of

in the *Acta Sanctorum*, Sept. iii. The meaning of the words put into the mouth of the elder Gregory by his son is plain, and the attempts to alter the reading are futile—

οὔπω τοσοῦτον ἐκμεμέτρηκας βίον
ὅσος διῆλθε θυσιῶν ἐμοὶ χρόνος.

In other words, "I was a bishop before you were born."

[1] *Carm.* i. 440.

the sanctity of marriage which deface so many pages of Jerome.[1]

As he grew older he developed a special fondness for the study of eloquence, which he regarded as the most powerful means of defending truth. He naturally exhausted at an early age the poor opportunities for instruction in a little town like Nazianzus, and his father was happily rich enough to send him to Caesarea, the chief town of Cappadocia.[2] It was there, in all probability, that he met Basil, the friend of his life, who was about the same age as himself, and who shared all his views and aspirations. From Caesarea Basil went to Constantinople, and Gregory entered the then famous rhetorical school of Caesarea in Palestine, where he studied under the rhetorician Thespis, and had the future Semi-Arian bishop Euzoius as his companion.[3] Here too he could make use of the celebrated library collected by the martyr Pamphilus. From Caesarea he went to Alexandria, the headquarters of Christian culture and philosophy.[4] At Alexandria he learnt his high admiration for the works of Origen, and he not improbably met Athanasius, who about the year 350 returned to his see after long exile.

The education of a Christian scholar was in those days extended over a longer period than is now possible. Even the two Caesareas and Alexandria had not ex-

[1] The absurd notion of Muratori that Gregory was married is founded on a mistaken view of his epigram to Theosebeia, Γρηγορίου μεγάλου σύζυγε ἀτρέκεως. She was the wife of Gregory of Nyssa.

[2] *Orat.* xliii. 13, 14. On the elder Gregory's patrimony, see *Orat.* xviii. 8, 39. He could not have built the magnificent church at Nazianzus without large private means. The tutor of Gregory of Nazianzus at Caesarea was Carterius (perhaps also the teacher of Chrysostom), to whom he devotes four epitaphs.

[3] Jer. *De Vir. illust.* 113; Epiphan. *Haer.* lxxiii. 37.

[4] *Orat.* vii. 6: παντοίας παιδεύσεως . . . ἐργαστήριον.

hausted Gregory's thirst for knowledge. He completed his philosophical training at Athens, "the mother of Plato and Demosthenes, and of all other varied wisdom."[1] For though Athens was but the wreck and shadow of her former self, the schools of heathen sophists and rhetoricians which still flourished there gave her a hollow semblance of her former glory.

So passionate was Gregory's eagerness to visit "the eye of Greece" and its renowned school, that he could not even wait for the safest season of the year, but set sail at the time of the equinoxial gales. As his ship neared Cyprus a storm burst upon the voyagers, which continued so long that the supply of water in the vessel was exhausted. "All," he says, "became one night," illuminated only by the flashes of lightning, while the sounds of the groaning and labouring vessel, and the frantic cries of the passengers, added to the terrors of the darkness. For twenty-two days the storm lasted. There seemed to be no choice for the unhappy crew but to perish either of thirst or by drowning. Gregory was during these days in an agony of terror, but the terror which he felt was not due to any physical dread of death. It was solely due to the fact that he had not yet been baptized. The incident is a singular illustration of the superstitious views which had already begun to surround the sacraments. Gregory was in every sense of the word a Christian, and so little did his conscience *reproach* him for the delay of his baptism, that in point of fact he did not receive baptism till many years later.[2] It was the unscriptural custom of the fourth century to delay baptism till ripe age, sometimes even, as in the case of Constan-

[1] Liban. *Epitaph. Julian.* p. 531.

[2] So says his biographer, Gregory the Presbyter. See Tillemont, ix. 334.

tine, till the deathbed, because the risk of dying unbaptized seemed smaller than the risk of falling into mortal sin after baptism.[1] It seemed quite right both to Gregory and to his pious parents to have postponed his baptism; and yet he had such strange thoughts of God as to imagine that though he had lived from childhood a pure and holy life he would be eternally lost merely for lack of the external ceremony. It did not seem to occur to him that the love of God is incapable of arbitrary tyranny, or that His grace can be wholly independent of mechanical channels. "While all feared the common death," says Gregory, "the terror of my soul was more fearful, for I ran the risk of departing hence wretched and uninitiated, longing for the spiritual water among the murderous waves."[2] So deep was his agitation that, even amidst their own peril, he attracted the attention of his fellow-voyagers. He rent his clothes and flung himself on deck praying and groaning, and vowing, with floods of tears, to devote his whole life to God if, as "a gift of earth and sea," He would save him.[3] It was the second dedication of his life. The crew were saved. The storm ceased. A Phœnician vessel provided them with water and provisions, and they arrived unhurt in the harbour of Ægina. Gregory believed that he owed his safety to the prayers of his parents, who felt an instinctive sense that he was in peril. One of his companions, a Christian boy, dreamt that his mother Nonna came speeding over the sea, grasped the vessel, and with scarcely an effort brought it safe to land. He always

[1] See, too, Tert. *De Bapt. ad fin.*

[2] He was not aware that under such circumstances he might lawfully have received *lay*-baptism, which, though approved by Tertullian, Jerome, and Augustine, seems to have been regarded as invalid in the Eastern Church.

[3] *Carm.* xi. 196: γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης δῶρον. Comp. *Orat.* xviii. 31.

regarded his mother as the guardian angel of his life and of their common vows. The incident made a deep impression on him. His waking thoughts imaged themselves after the storm in a dream that "he led in triumph a certain fury or malignant demon that had been busy to contrive his ruin."

From Ægina Gregory hurried to Athens, and though he has told us but little of his residence in the Cappadocian or the Palestinian Caesarea, or in Alexandria, he has left us in his forty-third oration a picture of his life as a student in the University of Athens. When he entered the city he was still a youth with the first down on his cheek; he left it as man of thirty.[1]

There was at that epoch a sort of sophisto-mania, as Gregory himself expresses it, on the part of the young.[2] They flocked to Athens, even from the farthest parts of Asia, to attend the lectures of men like Himerius and Proaeresius,[3] who were famous in their day, though now entirely forgotten.[4] The life of these young men resembled that of the students at German or American rather than at the English universities. It is described by Gregory in the eulogy which he pronounced on Basil in 381, from which I borrow the following particulars.

[1] *Carm.* xi. 238—

καὶ γὰρ πολὺς τέτραπτο τοῖς λόγοις χρόνος·
Ἤδη τριακοστὸν μοὶ σχεδὸν τοῦτ' ἦν ἔτος.

Orat. xliii. 25: τελοῦμεν εἰς ἄνδρας ἐξ ἀγενείων.

[2] *Orat.* xliii. 15: σοφιστομανοῦσιν Ἀθήνῃσι τῶν νέων οἱ πλεῖστοι καὶ ἀφρονέστεροι.

[3] Their lives are written by Eunapius, and there is extant a flattering letter of Julian to Proaeresius. He was sent by Constantius on an embassy to the Romans, who erected to him a statue with the inscription, "Rerum regina Roma regi eloquentiae." It is not impossible that Gregory may also have heard Libanius, who spent some time in Athens, though he refused a chair of rhetoric there.

[4] Proaeresius was a Christian, and a witty one. See Greg. *Epitaph.* v. σοφιστῶν πᾶν γένος ὑψιλόγων εἶκε Προαιρεσίῳ.

The course pursued by the most earnest students was encyclopaedic in its range. It comprised grammar, history, poetics, geometry, astronomy,[1] and not only arithmetic, but also those analogies and mysteries of numbers in which the Neo-Platonists delighted. Some of these branches of study were only pursued so far as to prevent the student from being quite at the mercy of experts. The rudiments of medicine were learned, and these proved exceedingly useful to Basil, who not only makes frequent allusions to them, but who was thus able, during years of wretched health, to be to some extent his own physician. These studies, however, were subordinate to others. The chief Athenian teachers delighted in the names of "rhetoricians" and "sophists," and Gregory and Basil did their utmost to learn anything good which they had to teach, while they did not adopt their moral character. "Fire-breathing rhetoric," as Gregory calls it, is mentioned first among their studies, and next to it in importance stood "philosophy," both practical and theoretical, including physics, ethics, and logic. Each of these, according to the "mania for triads," which was the fashion of the day, was subdivided into three branches.[2] Physics comprised theology, mathematics, and the theory of ideas; ethics comprised morals, economics, and politics; logic was subdivided into demonstrative, persuasive, and sophistic. In all these studies the two friends became proficient, and Basil surpassed all competitors.[3]

[1] *Orat.* xliii. 23: καὶ μέτροις ἐπιστατεῖ καὶ νομοθετεῖ ποιήμασιν.

[2] Fialon, *Étude sur St. Basile*, p. 26.

[3] Ullmann mentions music among their studies, but I do not see it alluded to by Gregory. Among the ancient Greeks "music" as a branch of education meant the study of melody and harmony in a much wider sense than among us. Music to them meant the government of the passions; self-control; the due inter-relation of the elements of life; the exclusion of discords; proportion, solidarity, worship.

The study of classical literature occupied much of their time. Many Christians disparaged the reading of the great Pagan authors, but Gregory and Basil rose superior to so narrow a prejudice. "We must not," says Gregory, "despise the heavens and the earth and the air because some have wrongly chosen them for worship, honouring God's creatures in the place of God;[1] but while we enjoy all their usefulness for purposes of life and happiness, we escape all that is dangerous, not setting up the creature against the Creator, as fools do, but apprehending the Creator from the things created, and, as the divine Apostle says, 'Bringing every thought into captivity to Christ.'[2] All that concerns the search and contemplation of truth we accept, but all that leads men to demons, and error, and the abyss of destruction we loath, except in so far as even from these things we have been assisted towards piety, learning the better from the worse, and finding in their weakness the strength of our own doctrine."[3]

Few of the Athenian students were so earnest-minded as the two young Cappadocians. The leading sophists were the chief objects of admiration, and all the obscurer and less distinguished youths formed themselves into parties to maintain their several favourites. So absorbing was this spirit of emulation that even the more sensible youths were infected with the partisanship, and the result was that the university society of Athens was broken into cliques separated by mutual rivalry. "You may see them," says Gregory, "animated by the same furious passions as

[1] Bossuet says that among the Greeks "tout était Dieu excepté Dieu même."—*Disc. sur l'hist. univ.* ii. 3.

[2] 2 Cor. x. 5.

[3] *Orat.* xliii. 1: *παίδευσιν . . . οὐ ταύτην μόνην τὴν εὐγενεστέραν καὶ ἡμετέραν . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ἔξωθεν ἣν οἱ πολλοὶ Χριστιανῶν διαπτύουσιν, ὡς ἐπίβουλον καὶ σφαλερὰν καὶ θεοῦ πόρρω βάλλουσαν, κακῶς εἰδότες.*

the factions in the circus. Just as the excited spectators at the racecourse leap up and shout and fling dust to heaven, and, though seated, act as though they were charioteers, and scourge the air as if they were scourging their steeds, and use their fingers as whips, and yoke and unyoke their steeds, especially those among them who are poor, and perhaps do not even possess a single day's food—so these students behave as regards their rival teachers. Their one object is to increase the numbers of their own class, and so to make their teachers richer by their exertions. The whole thing is prodigiously absurd."

What manner of men the sophists were who inspired the youth of that day, Christian as well as Pagan, with such unbounded enthusiasm, we may learn from the writings of Libanius,[1] Eunapius,[2] and Photius.[3] The picture drawn of them is not flattering. They had adopted the name of sophists as a title of honour. They for the most part cultivated an Asiatic and euphuistic style, which has been found so intolerable that the writings of the majority of them have perished. Their conceit and avarice, their mutual flatteries or internecine factions, made them the laughing-stock of practical men.

Youths are more or less like each other in all ages and all over the world. Gregory describes the "initiation" which was rigidly demanded among the students at Athens before a freshman was admitted into their society. It resembled the ordeals to which a new boy used to be subjected in public schools, or at Woolwich and Sandhurst, or in the German universities. It was

[1] Libanius, *De Vita suâ*, p. 13 *sqq.* ed. Reisk.

[2] Eunapius, *Vitae Sophistarum; in Proaeresium*, pp. 130-133.

[3] Photius, *Bibl. Cod.* 80. Ullmann also refers to Wyttenbach, *Bibl. Crit.* viii. pp. 86 *sqq.*

called "the bath," and was greatly dreaded by timid freshmen.[1] The novice was met at landing and taken possession of, either by force or willingly. It was "the Attic custom," half jest, half earnest. First of all he was hospitably received at the house of those who had been the earliest to take possession of him, who were either friends, or kinsmen, or fellow-countrymen, or some of the more advanced students of the sophists. The poorer students actually paid their teachers by obtaining for them as many followers as they could.[2] "Then," says Gregory, "the new comer is quizzed and bantered by every one who likes to do so. The object of the proceeding is to take the conceit out of the freshmen, and to bring them under authority from the first. The chaffing is more or less audacious or reasonable in proportion to the youth's rusticity or refinement.[3] The affair is exceedingly terrifying and cruel to those who are not in the secret, but to those who know the issue it is very pleasant and kindly, for the things threatened are much more ostensible than real.

"The freshman is then led by an escort of students to the bath. The procession is as follows. The students

[1] See, too, Liban. *De Vit. suâ.* The jest was poor enough, but not one tenth part so stupid as the custom of "tucking" freshmen at Oxford, a custom of great antiquity mentioned in the life of the first Earl of Shaftesbury. The seniors called up the freshmen, made them hold out their chins, and then with the nail of the right thumb grated off the skin from the lip to the chin, and made them drink a glass of salt and water!

[2] *Orat.* xliii. 15. It might almost seem as if in this way a youth was sometimes prevented from joining the class which he had *intended* to join.

[3] *Orat.* xliii. 16: Ἐρεσχελεῖται δὲ παρὰ μὲν τῶν θρασύτερον παρὰ δὲ τῶν λογικώτερον, ὅπως ἂν ἀγροικίας ἢ αστείοτητος ἔχῃ. The Benedictine editor and Ullmann understand the passage as I do, but the Greek may perhaps bear the more logical meaning attached to it by Fialon. "L'audace ou l'esprit des plaisanteries sont en rapport avec la grossièreté ou la politesse *de ceux qui les font.*"

who are to initiate the youth arrange themselves in a line, two and two, at a little distance from each other, and conduct him to the bath. And when they get near it they leap and call out as though they were in a frenzy, shouting that they must not proceed but stop, since the bath will not admit them. At the same time they beat upon the doors, frightening the youth by their clatter, and by shouts of 'Stop! stop!' and by a great deal of jostling and horse-play, which lasts for some time. Finally they allow him the *entrée*, and so they give him his liberty; and after 'the bath' they receive him as one of themselves." He paid certain fees to the leading sophists, who were called *Acromitae*, and was allowed after a time to wear the cloak (τρίβων).[1]

This somewhat rough method of "paying his footing" cannot have been altogether delightful to the grave soul of Gregory. It was not till after he began his student-life that he had the great delight of welcoming to Athens his friend Basil. Basil came with a high reputation for eloquence, ability, and knowledge, and Gregory knew that the bear's-play of students would be so distasteful to his dignified and modest disposition that he actually persuaded the Athenian youths to give up in this case their immemorial custom. Most of them had heard of Basil's fame, and they thought it right to treat him as something more than a freshman. He was almost the only person who, thanks to his friend's thoughtfulness, escaped the noisy and tumultuous initiation of "the bath."[2]

[1] Phot. *Cod.* 80 (Bekker's ed. i. p. 60).

[2] See an account of this "bath" initiation in Olympiodorus, v. 150; Bekker, *Ekloge Historiarum*, xviii. 461. The youth was met with cries of στᾶ, στᾶ, οὐ λούει, and was only admitted after long and violent tumult. Theodore of Cir also mentions this custom: Ναὶ ναί, τὸ λουτρὸν τοῖς Ἀθήνησι ξένοις, ὡς πλῆκτρον, ὡς φόβητρον, ὡς καὶ θέα! Eunapius

Basil was grateful for this service, and his friendly intimacy with his fellow-countryman was deepened by an incident which furnishes another curious illustration of the sophistic school of Athens in the fourth century.

The clubs or guilds[1] of young men at the schools were generally on a national basis, and there was a club of young Armenians. Possibly the Armenians were not particularly well-disposed towards the Cappadocians, and at any rate they were jealous of Basil's reputation, and wanted, in student slang, "to take him down a peg or two." They knew something of him, for some of them had been pupils of his father at Neocaesarea in Pontus, and fancied that they could use their more recent studies to score a victory against him.[2] They came to him, therefore, in friendly guise, and entrapped him in a discussion which they had already prepared. In spite of this they were getting the worst of it in the *rencontre*, when Gregory, who had not suspected their malicious design, came chivalrously to the rescue of the weaker side, in order that the glory of Athenian dialectics might not be sullied by the decided victory of a new comer. His assistance was so powerful that he restored the routed forces of the Armenians, and brought the discussion once more to equal terms. After this Basil began to lose ground in the argument, when Gregory once more changed sides, came to his friend's assistance, and so restored the balance that Basil turned his rout into triumph and completely defeated his opponents.

After this second service the friendship between the

gives a singular account of his first introduction to Athens as a boy of fifteen.

[1] *φράτριαι.*

[2] These intellectual challenges resemble those which used to exist at some of our public schools and universities, and they not unfrequently ended in blows.

two, "from being a spark became an uplifted and burning torch"; and it was so precious to them both that they could afford to despise the henceforth open enmity of the Armenian faction, who charged Gregory with having betrayed not only them but Athens herself.

Basil soon grew weary of Athens. It wholly disappointed him, and his countenance became gloomy with the thought that he had left his home to visit that theatre of noisy emptiness and hollow glitter. He named Athens "a vain felicity."[1] Gregory bade him wait a little longer. If at first sight his sophistical and rhetorical teachers seemed void of all wisdom he must not come to too hasty a conclusion about them, but wait and observe. Basil recovered his good spirits, and from that time the two friends shared the same roof and the same table, as they were of one mind and one heart.[2] They followed the same pursuits without rivalry or jealousy, and each set to the other the highest example. Their friendship survived all future trials because it was not founded on superficial qualities. It was a godly and soberminded friendship, and was specially important to them because the life at Athens, a city so "rich in the evil wealth of idols," was accompanied by many perils to the faith, both moral and spiritual.[3] It enabled them with more joy and confidence to be and to call themselves Christians in a heathen city, and to prefer this designation to any of those which were in vogue among the students. Many of the youths among whom they lived wasted their opportunities at Athens as they do

[1] *Orat.* xliii. 18: κενὴν μακαρίαν τὰς Ἀθήνας ὠνόμαζεν.

[2] *Carm.* xi. (*de Vit.*) 229: τὰ πάντα μὲν δὴ κοινὰ καὶ ψυχὴ μία. *Orat.* xliii. 19: τὰ πάντα ἦμεν ἀλλήλοις, ὁμοστέγοι, ὁμοδίαιτοι, συμφυεῖς, τὸ ἓν βλέποντες.

[3] *Orat.* xliii. 21: βλαβεραὶ μὲν τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἀθῆναι τὰ εἰς ψυχήν . . . καὶ γὰρ πλουτοῦσι τὸν κακὸν πλοῦτον, εἰδώλα.

in all universities. They were idle; they were dissolute; they were quarrelsome. All such companions were avoided by the young Cappadocians, who only chose for friends those who were virtuous and in earnest. They went to the exhortations of Christian teachers, and avoided feasts, theatres, public meetings, and drinking bouts. Most of the Athenian sophists were Pagans, and they knew how to dress their crude idolatry in the enchanting colours of myth and philosopheme. Many Christian youths were shaken in their allegiance to the faith by such panegyrists and advocates of heathenism. But Gregory and Basil had been too deeply rooted and grounded in Christian doctrine to be carried away by a rhetoric which they could surpass and a sophistry which they saw to be merely plausible. "To me," says Gregory, "if to any one Athens was truly golden, and the provider of things beautiful. I sought there for eloquence and I found happiness, for I found Basil. I was like Saul, who in searching for asses found a kingdom. The accessory advantage was superior to the main object."

Their stay at Athens must have covered a period of some years. Basil was not the only illustrious person whose intercourse Gregory had shared. He made the acquaintance of no less a person than Julian, the nephew and heir of Constantius, who was but a year younger than himself, and had come to Athens, by permission of Constantius, to complete his studies. He became Emperor in 361, the year after Basil and Gregory left Athens.[1] He was nominally a Christian, because he held it politic to be so; but it was thoroughly understood that his secret inclinations were towards Paganism.

[1] Julian's life at Athens is described by Libanius in his *Epitaphion*, p. 532, ed. Reisk.

He reversed, says the Pagan sophist, the fable of Æsop, for he covered the lion with the ass's skin. Gregory was endowed with a considerable insight into character, and he saw through Julian's hypocrisy. Not long after meeting him, he exclaimed to his friends, "What a curse is the Empire nurturing!" "The unsteadiness of his behaviour," he says, "and the exaggeration of his enthusiasm made me a prophet. It seemed to me no good sign that his neck was not firm; that he was often shrugging his shoulders up and down like a pair of scales; that his glances were shy and wandering; that he rolled his eyes like those of a maniac; and that he did not stand firmly and quietly on his feet. I as little liked his nose, which breathed of pride and contempt; the laughable distortions of his face, which witnessed to the same pride; his inordinate and gusty bursts of laughter; his nods and headshakings with no reason for them; his hesitating and convulsive way of speaking; his sudden and senseless questions, and no better answers, which often contradicted each other, and made their appearance without any scientific order."[1] No doubt Gregory, in this description, is taking no pains to conceal his strong dislike, and makes no allowance for the difficulties of Julian's position, and the dangers and troubles which had surrounded his youth. The passage occurs in the denunciation of Julian written after his death, which abounds in the severest reflexions upon him. Still the main outlines are corroborated even by the heathen historian Ammianus Marcellinus.[2] He draws a picture of his

[1] *Orat.* v. 23, 24. See the two orations against Julian (*Oratt.* iv. v), and compare the insults heaped upon Julian by the wit of the Antiochenes, "Ridebatur ut Cecrops homo brevis humeros extentans angustos . . . grandiaque incedens tanquam Oti frater et Ephialtes," etc. (Amm. Marc. xxii. 14).

[2] Gregory's two orations against Julian belong avowedly to the order of invectives (λόγοι στηλιτευτικοί). See *Orat.* v. 42 (στηλιτεύειν is like our "to pillory a person").

personal appearance—his moderate stature, soft hair, thick and pointed beard, expressive eyes, fine eyebrows, straight nose, large mouth, hanging lower lip, strong neck, and broad shoulders, and says that his whole frame was well knit for strength and athletic endurance. Marcellinus felt for the Emperor a warm admiration, but admits that there was an Asiatic taint of levity in his character and intellect; that he talked too loosely, and rarely held his tongue. In his *Misopogon* Julian has also given us a description of himself when, after his accession to the throne, he adopted the garb and habit of a Cynic, with his long nails, inky hands, shaggy breast, and the long and populous beard with which he avenged himself on nature for not having given him a more handsome face.

But the time came when Gregory and Basil had learnt all that was to be learnt from Athenian teachers. The day for departure was at hand, which was to be a day for beginning a more perfect life, and for the realisation of hopes which they had agreed to share. The parting from Athens was necessarily painful. Their friendship had become proverbial, and many other friends had gathered around them. Their name was held in high honour not only by their teachers and by their fellow-students, but even throughout Greece. They could not bid farewell to those who loved them, and to a spot so full of fascination, without many tears and embraces. They were accompanied to the Peiraeus by a throng of their comrades, and even by some of their teachers, and every effort was made to induce them to stay. Basil resisted these entreaties, but Gregory yielded to them. "I was left behind at Athens," he says, "partly—for the truth shall be spoken—because I was softened, but partly because I was betrayed by him who

had been persuaded to abandon one who did not wish to abandon him. Had it not happened I could not have believed it, but I yielded to those who wished to drag me back. Severance was like a sentence of death to us both."

But when Basil was gone Athens became intolerable to Gregory. It is probable that he had been offered a lectureship on rhetoric,[1] but he had other and higher purposes. He only stayed a short time longer; and then he says, "like the Homeric steed, I burst the bonds of those who wished to keep me back, and rushing over the plain with thundering hoofs, I flew towards my friend."[2]

[1] *Carm. de Vit. suâ*, xi. 256: ὡς δὴ λόγων δώσοντες ἐκ ψήφου κράτος. Gregory the Presbyter, in his biography, says: Γρηγόριος δὲ ἀπριὶξ κατείχετο τοῖς Ἀθηναίων φοιτηταῖς . . . παιδεύειν αὐτοὺς ἐκλιπαροῦσι, τόν τε σοφιστικὸν θρόνον παρακαλοῦσι δέχεσθαι.

[2] These particulars are all derived from Gregory's Encomium on Basil, *Orat.* xliii., and his poem on his own life. In the latter (*Carm.* xi. 264) he says that he set off almost secretly: ἔκλεψα μικροῦ λάθρα τὴν ἐκδημίαν.

XII

Continued

GREGORY AND BASIL

"Beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies."—MILTON, *Reason of Church Government.*

SECTION II

GREGORY'S education was now over. In Caesarea he had learnt eloquence. In Alexandria he had gained some acquaintance with Platonic philosophy, a deep honour for Athanasius and Nicene theology, and an enthusiastic admiration for Origen and his methods of thought and Scriptural exposition. Athens, where he had spent some ten years, had made a yet deeper impression upon him. His acquaintance with Basil had there ripened into devoted friendship, and his acquaintance with Julian into strong dislike. He had gained a thorough familiarity with the literature and philosophy of classic Greece, and a mastery of the rhetoric and dialectics which were then in vogue. Meanwhile he had escaped entirely unscathed from the fascinations of heathenism, and his Christian vocation had become more and more the settled purpose of his life.[1]

[1] See Ullmann, p. 28.

He returned home by way of Constantinople about 356, and there, without any previous agreement, he was so fortunate as to meet his brother Caesarius, who meanwhile had been studying medicine and science at Alexandria with such success and renown that great efforts were made to induce him to stay in the capital of the East. But Caesarius, though of an ambitious nature, could not resist the happiness of accompanying his brother to revisit their aged parents. Nonna had offered many a prayer to God that both her sons might revisit together the home of their childhood, and she had the happiness to see them return home after so long an absence, firm in the faith of their fathers, and prepared to fight the battle of life with distinction and usefulness.

The brothers were men of ability, and had used well the opportunities of their education. In other respects they differed. Caesarius was to a certain extent a man of the world, while the aspirations of Gregory were entirely spiritual. The love of God burned on the altar of both their hearts, but in Gregory it was a steady and all-consuming fire, in Caesarius it was a more leaping and unsteady flame. He could not resign himself to a life spent in a remote provincial town. In spite of the wish of his parents and his brother, he could not resist the splendid attractions of worldly success in Constantinople, whatever might be its perils. He returned to the city, and was almost immediately made chief physician to the Emperor Constantius. Such success was the more dazzling because Constantius was a man of suspicious nature, and rarely accorded his friendship to any one so readily as he did to this young Cappadocian. He leapt with a bound into the very foremost place in his profession, and the court as well as

the Emperor were won by his agreeable manner and scientific skill. Happily his religion stood the test. He retained his Christian simplicity, and not even the seductive flatteries of Julian, who became Emperor the following year, could tempt him from the open profession of his faith. Julian, who had been successful in some of his efforts at perversion, thought that he could add Caesarius to the number of his triumphs. But the young physician maintained his cause in argument even against the master of so many legions, and before an assembly of courtiers declared "that he was and that he should ever remain a Christian." "O happy father!" exclaimed the Emperor; "oh, unhappy sons!" The father was happy whose training could not be shaken; the sons unhappy, he thought, because they had not been trained in the heathen religion.[1] Gregory, it need hardly be said, did his best by his counsels and letters to keep Caesarius firm in his allegiance to the God of his fathers.[2]

So far from seeking the noise and glory of publicity, Gregory's one cherished wish was to retire from the world altogether.[3] Nazianzus was too narrow a sphere for Caesarius, and it was too wide for Gregory. While Caesarius was eager to leave it for Constantinople, Gregory was no less eager to leave it for perfect solitude. He had sated his thirst for knowledge, and now longed for a life of contemplation. His fellow-Nazianzenes wished to see the ripe fruit of such prolonged years of study, and in order to please them Gregory gave one or two public addresses. "He danced a little," he says, "and then quitted the stage."[4] He entirely declined to

[1] Greg. *Orat.* vii. 12, 13. [2] *Ep.* 17.
[3] *Ep.* xxiii. Ἐμοὶ δὲ μεγίστη πρᾶξις ἔστιν ἡ ἀπραξιά.
[4] *Carm.* xi. 274 : τοῖς φίλοις ὠρχησάμην.

assume the functions of a teacher of rhetoric. Indeed he was now preparing for his baptism which, strange to say, not even the extreme agony of mind endured from its postponement in the stormy voyage to Athens had induced him yet to face. He looked forward to it as the main event of his life, in which all his past sins were to be washed away, and he was to be enabled to live henceforth a life in which his learning, his talents, his eloquence—all that he was, and all that he had—should be laid as an offering at the feet of God. It was to be his complete and final gift,—the selling of all that he possessed in order to purchase the pearl of great price. His eloquence he would indeed still cultivate, but only as a means of service. "The word, *i.e.* the gift of utterance, is all that I still hold fast as a servant of The Word. And since I despise all earthly delight, so has my love entirely narrowed itself to this, or rather to God alone." He had said to Wisdom, "Thou art my sister," and sought these gifts of wisdom and reason as his crown of grace and luxury.[1]

Two modes of holy life were open to Gregory—the contemplative and the active—that of which Elijah and John the Baptist were regarded as the models, and that which was followed by St. Peter and St. Paul. He deliberately regarded the latter as the most serviceable to mankind. Naturally fond of retirement, he was yet preserved by good sense and sound character from the rapturously extravagant estimates of ascetic solitude on which Jerome delighted to indulge his rhetoric. He saw the evils and dangers which may beset either the public or the monastic lot,[2] and he desired to avoid these while he gained all that was best from both. "Shouldst

[1] *Orat.* vi. 5.

[2] *Carm.* xi. 286: ἄλλων γὰρ εἵνεκ' ἄλλο καλὸν ἢ κακὸν Ἐφαίνεθ'.

thou," he asks in one of his poems,[1] "prefer action or contemplation? Vision is the work of the perfect, but action of the majority. Both are right and dear, but strive towards that which is thy nature." His nature was so essentially contemplative that he would no doubt have decided to embrace the monastic life, while endeavouring to combine it with active usefulness. But two influences kept him at home—the greater facilities for the study of Scripture, and the duty of cherishing the declining years of his aged parents. The home life did not exclude the possibility of a strict asceticism; nay, he desired that it should combine the blessings of monastic solitude with those of life in the world. He slept on the ground; he clothed himself in rough and plain materials; he lived on bread and salt, and drank nothing but water.[2] He occupied his days in work, and much of his nights in prayer, praise, and meditation. He bewept with many tears his former fondness for laughter; and his earlier life — innocent as it was— seemed to him reprehensible, because it was not a life of severe self-denial. We learn from his last will that he did not abandon his patrimony, but he gave very largely to the poor. He found his chief happiness in silence and self-examination, but meanwhile it was his duty—and one which, bitterly as he complains of it, was very wholesome for him — to manage his father's property, and look after all the details, legal and agricultural, which that duty involved. He specially complains of the management of servants, which he calls "a stake-net of destruction."[3] "Dense and troublesome cares,"

[1] Tetrastichon. i. (*Opp.* ii. 596).

[2] *Carm.* i. 75; liv. 153-175. He says that he could be a monk in heart if not in outward guise: *τρόπων γὰρ εἶναι τὴν μονήν, οὐ σωμάτων* (*Carm.* xi. 329). He says that those who adopted the monastic life were *αὐτοῖς μόνοις χρησίμους*, "useful to themselves alone."

[3] *οἷον ὀλέθρου δίκτυον.*

he sings, "drag me down from heaven to my mother earth."[1] Perhaps a fuller experience would have shown him that

> "Heaven is ofttimes nearer when we stoop
> Than when we soar."

Basil, meanwhile, who had caught the monastic enthusiasm during his travels in Egypt and Syria, had retired from Caesarea to a beautiful spot at Annesi, near the river Iris in Pontus, whence he wrote to Gregory to claim the fulfilment of the promise made at Athens that he would share his retirement. Gregory was then living in the Tiberine district, on an estate owned by his father near Nazianzus, and even from Caesarea Basil had written to rally him about his wintry and muddy abode. Gregory had written back in the same playful strain to jibe Basil on his residence in a crowded town. "I am not going to stand your abuse of Tiberine," he says, "with its mud and its wintriness, my high-stepping friend, thundering your way over the plains, and winged, and aerial, and borne along on the arrow of Abaris." . . . "Am I doing wrong because you are pale," he writes, "and breathe with difficulty, and measure your scanty sunlight; while I am fresh with health, and am satisfied, and am not circumscribed? Your gains are these: you luxuriate, and get rich, and live in the agora. I don't praise this. Either then cease reproaching us with our mud — for neither did I make the city nor you the winter—or instead of our mud I will fling in your teeth your hucksters, and all the nuisances of cities." Little notes like these—full of fun from beginning to end—show that the ascetic tendencies of Gregory had by no means quenched his cheerful gaiety.

[1] *Carm.* xi. 140-164; comp. *Orat.* xliii. 25.

But no sooner had Basil found in Pontus a place suitable for his purpose than he wrote to his friend an enchanting description of his mountain retreat, a description memorable as one of the very few in the remains of antiquity which show any of that love for romantic scenery, which in its width and intensity is exclusively modern.[1] After mentioning that he has heard from his brother (Gregory of Nyssa) the half-formed intention of his friend to join him, but that he has been so often deceived that he can hardly credit the news, he says, "I must set off at once for Pontus, in which, if God will, I shall cease from wandering. For, abandoning at last the vain hopes which once I had of you—or, to speak more truly the *dreams*, for I approve of Pindar's remark that 'hopes are the dreams of the waking'—I started for Pontus to seek for life. There indeed God has shown me a spot which exactly suits my taste, so that I have seen in reality just such a place as I often imagined for myself in the dreams of idle fancy. It is a lofty mountain, overshadowed with a deep wood, irrigated on the north by cold and transparent streams. At its foot is spread a low plain, enriched perpetually with the streams from the mountains. The wood, a virgin forest of trees of various kinds and foliage which grows around

[1] See Humboldt's *Cosmos*, ii. 1-30 (2d ed. Sabine): "In this simple description of the landscape," says Humboldt, "and of the life of the forest, there speak feelings more intimately allied to those of modern times than anything which Greek and Roman antiquity have bequeathed to us. From the lonely mountain hut to which Basil had retired the eye looks down on the humid roof of the forest foliage beneath." The description, however, can hardly be called "simple." He points out the same love of nature in the *Hexaemeron*, where Basil speaks of the stars as "those eternal flowers of heaven," and describes the serene nights of Asia Minor; and praises the beauty of the sea: "how, when gently agitated by mildly-breathing airs, it gives back the varied hues of heaven, now in white, now in blue, now in roseate light, and caresses the shore in peaceful play" See *Hexaem. Hom.* iv. 7.

it, almost serves it as a rampart; so that even the Isle of Calypso, which Homer evidently admired as a paragon of loveliness, is nothing in comparison with this. For indeed it is very nearly an island, from its being enclosed on all sides with rocky boundaries. On two sides of it are deep and precipitous ravines, and on another side the river flowing from the steep is itself a continuous and almost impassable barrier. The mountain range with its moon-shaped windings, walls off the accessible parts of the plain. There is but one entrance, of which we are the masters. My hut is built on another point, which uplifts a lofty tendon on the summit, so that this plain is outspread before the gaze, and from the height I can catch a glimpse of the river flowing round, which, to my fancy, affords no less delight than the view of the Strymon as you look from Amphipolis. For the Strymon broadens into lakes with its more tranquil stream, and is so sluggish as almost to forfeit the character of a river. The Iris, on the other hand, flowing with a swifter course than any river I know, for a short space billows along the adjacent rock, and then, plunging over it, rolls into a deep whirlpool, affording a most delightful view to me and to every spectator, and abundantly supplying the needs of the inhabitants, for it nurtures an incredible number of fishes in its eddies. Why need I tell you of the sweet exhalations from the earth, or the breezes from the river? Other persons might admire the multitude of the flowers, or of the lyric birds, but I have no time to attend to them. But my highest eulogy of the spot is that, prolific as it is of all kinds of fruits from its happy situation, it bears for me the sweetest of all fruits—tranquillity; not only because it is free from the noises of cities, but because it is not traversed by a single visitor except the hunters, who

occasionally join us. For, besides its other advantages, it also produces animals — not bears and wolves, like yours—heaven forbid! but it feeds herds of stags, and of wild goats, and hares, and creatures of that kind. Do you not then observe what a narrow risk I ran, fool that I was, to change such a spot as this for Tiberine, the depth of the habitable world.[1] I am now hastening to it; pardon me. For even Alcmaeon, when he discovered the Echinades, no longer endured his wanderings."

Tiberine—the district in which Arianzus was situated —seems to have been for Basil a standing joke, and Gregory, in undertaking the defence of his native soil, laughs freely at Basil's poetic description. "Joke away," he writes back, "I don't mind; revel in your powers of language. I enjoy everything which comes from you, be it what it may. You are jesting, it seems to me, not for the sake of jesting, but to drag me to your side, just as people dam rivers to force them into another channel. That is what I always think of your remarks. I will admire your Pontus, and the Pontic mistiness, and the habitation suitable for exile, and the mountain-crests over your head, and the wild beasts which test your faith, and the plain which lies below—or shall I call it a rat-hole with the pompous names of Phrontistery, and Monastery, and Leisure? — and the thickets of wild plants, and the crown of precipitous mountains by which you are not crowned but shut in, and the air which you have to measure, and the sun for which you long, of which you catch glimpses as through a chimney. Oh,

[1] Basil, *Ep.* xiv. The Iris flows through a valley a little to the west of Neocaesarea (Niksar) and afterwards joins the Lycus. Morier speaks with enthusiasm of the wild mountain scenery. "No description is adequate to paint the brilliancy and luxuriance of the vegetation and the picturesque forms of this region."

you Pontic Cimmerians and sunless ones, condemned not only to the six months' night (as it is said of some), but no part of whose life is free from shadow, for your whole life is one long night, and truly in Scripture phrase the shadow of death. I praise too the narrow and rocky path; I know not whether it leads to a kingdom or to Hades, but for your sake let it lead to a kingdom.[1] And the midmost space—shall I falsely call it an Eden?—and the fountain which divides itself into four heads by which the earth is bedewed, or the dry and dewless wilderness? and what Moses, striking the rock into a fountain with his staff, shall make it fertile? For wherever there are no stones, there it is a torrent-bed; and where there are no torrents, it is a thorn bed; and all above the thorns is precipice; and the road over it is surrounded by precipices, rendering anxious the minds of those who pass along it, and training them to look after their safety. And the river roars below, this placid Strymon of yours; it is as stormy as it is fishy. It does not spread itself into a lake, but sweeps down into abysses, oh, you high talker and framer of strange expressions! For it is great, and fearful, and drowns the psalmody of those above. The falls and cataracts of the Nile are nothing to it, so loudly does it shout you down night and day, being rough, and impassable, and turbid, and undrinkable. Its only philanthropy is that it does not sweep away your abode when torrents and storms madden it. That is what I think of your Isles of the Blest, or of you blessed ones. Do not admire your 'moon-shaped valley-windings,' which rather throttle than defend the accessible parts of your plain; and the 'tendon' which swells over your mountain-crest, which makes your life

[1] εἰς Βασιλείαν, a play on the name of Basil.

like that of Tantalus;[1] and the flowing breezes and exhalations of the earth which refresh your fainting spirits; and the 'lyric' birds, which sing indeed, but of famine, and which only flutter around a wilderness. No one stays there, you say, except for hunting; and, add, that he may look on you as on the dead!

"This is perhaps too long for a letter, but too short for a comedy. If you will bear my jesting in a proper spirit, you will do well; otherwise I will add even more."[2]

The pleasantry seems to us rather heavy and far-fetched, but it must lose very much in a translation, and we probably miss most of the fine irony which may lie in the way in which Gregory parodies his friend's very unusual and ecstatic description of "moon-shaped valley-windings," and "lyric birds," and "tendon of a hill." In other letters no doubt Gregory must have told his friend that the primary duty to his parents was one to which he must sacrifice his own longing to join him in the Paradise of his Pontic retreat amid hills and woods and streams. He promised, however, to come to him at least for a time, and at last was able to do so. Long afterwards he looked back with unquenched enthusiasm to that delightful time. It is true that the broth was trying, and the bread hard, and that Gregory and Basil might have been seen toiling like two common labourers to spread an "Augean heap" of manure over the meagre garden of pot-herbs, and levelling banks, and

[1] According to one form of the legend, a huge rock always hung trembling over the head of Tantalus.

[2] Gregory, *Ep.* iv. (*Opp.* ii. 3, Bened. 1840). It is clear that even at this late epoch descriptions of natural scenery were regarded as eccentric. After the exquisite little sketch of the stream and the plane tree at the beginning of the *Phaedrus*, the youth expresses great astonishment that Socrates should notice such things.

even dragging heavy carts together with neck and hand. But the worst hardships of that day, lightened by friendship, looked delightful in the purple distance of memory.[1] "What I wrote to you before," he says, "about your life in Pontus was in jest not in earnest; but what I am now writing is very much in earnest. Oh, that one would place me in the months of those in former days,[2] in which I was luxuriating with you in suffering hardship. Voluntary affliction is more precious than involuntary delight. Who will give me back those psalmodies and vigils, and those far journeyings through prayer to God, and that—as it were—immaterial and bodiless life? that unity of life and soul among the brethren who are being deified and uplifted by you? that emulation and whettening of virtue which we secured by written rules and limitations? who will give me back that loving labour in the sacred oracles, and the light found in them by the guidance of the Spirit? or, to speak of smaller and cheaper things, who will give me back the course and routine of daily toils, the wood-carrying and stone-cutting, the planting and irrigating? who will give me back that golden plane tree more precious than that of Xerxes, under which used to sit, not a king worn out with vices, but a monk meagre with self-denial, which 'I planted; Apollos'—your worthiness—'watered, but God caused to grow' to my honour, that a remembrance of my toil may be preserved among you, as Aaron's rod that budded is said and believed to have been preserved in the ark?

"It is very easy to pray for this, but not easy to obtain it. But aid me and inspire me with your virtue, and work with me, and preserve for me by your prayers the advantages which we once enjoyed together,

[1] *Ep.* xi. (*Opp.* ii. 8th ed. 1840). [2] Job xxix. 2 (LXX.)

that we may not in a short time be scattered like a shadow when the day declines. For I breathe you more than the air; and I am only alive when I am with you either in your actual presence or by imagination in your absence."

Of the method of life adopted by Gregory and his companions in the retreat which they had established I shall speak in the Life of Basil. It resembled that of all monks in its "vigils, fasts, prayers, tears, smitings of the breast, standing the night through, the mind going forth to God; disordered hair, feet naked in imitation of the Apostles, neglected clothing, unwandering eyes." No doubt little human frailties sometimes gave a very different aspect to this "angelic" life, and even Basil could be "hungry and cross."[1] Fondly as Gregory looked back to the brief period, he no doubt found, as Basil did, that a man can be an exile from the world but can never be an exile from himself, and that a man may also seclude himself from the world's seductions as effectually in cities as in solitude. One famous book seems to have been the permanent fruit of this brief retirement. The two friends drew up a collection of valuable extracts from the writings of Origen, which is still extant under the name of *Philokalia*.[2] It furnishes one more proof of the impression which had been made on the minds of the greatest Fathers by the saintly genius of that persecuted teacher. Gregory also assisted Basil in drawing up the rules which became the normal code for so many Eastern monasteries.

[1] See Ruffner, *Fathers of the Desert*, ii. 300.

[2] On the *Philokalia*, see Greg. *Ep.* cxv.; Socrates, *H. E.* iv. 26; Fabricius, *Bibl. Graec.* vii. 221.

XII

Continued

GREGORY AND JULIAN

"Perfidus ille Deo, sed non et perfidus orbi."—PRUDENTIUS.

SECTION III

AFTER a year or two of this happy life, Gregory was recalled from the Pontic monastery by pressing duties at Nazianzus. His father, and the Church over which he presided, were in urgent need of his presence and assistance.

The age of Constantius was the age of synods, many of which did nothing but mischief. "He confused the perfect and simple Christian religion," says Ammianus Marcellinus, "with anile superstition; and by intricate inquiry, rather than dignified organisation, he stirred up a multitude of discords; and these, when they acquired head, he increased by a strife of words. Throngs of bishops, running about hither and thither to 'synods' as they call them, tried to drag every ordinance to their own decision; and so Constantius seriously hampered and disarranged the postal service of the Empire."[1] The disputes of the age turned almost ex-

[1] Amm. Marc. xxi. 16.

clusively on the Trinity as defined by the Council of Nice in 325, and on difficult metaphysical speculations as to the relation to each other of the two natures in the Person of Christ. Constantius was inclined to favour the views of the Arians, and, in order to manipulate the bishops more successfully, he had in 359 summoned a council to meet in two divisions, of which the Eastern portion was to sit at Seleucia in Isauria, and the Western at Rimini in Italy. The history of those two councils has been already narrated in the Lives of Athanasius and Hilary. The Seleucian Council adopted with few changes the heretical Semi-Arian creed of the Council of Sirmium, saying that the Son was "like unto the Father according to the Scriptures," but leaving out the words "in all respects" (*κατὰ πάντα*), and dropping the disputed word "Being" (*οὐσία*) altogether, on the plea that it did not occur in Scripture. The Fathers at Rimini, anxious to get home, and tired out by the arts of the Emperor, precipitately adopted this Sirmian formula, some from fear, and some because they were beguiled into it (A.D. 359). Out of 400 only 20 were non-content. The majority wrote a letter of thanks to Constantius couched in terms as outrageously flattering as any which ecclesiastics have in all ages been in the habit of addressing to kings. Constantius demanded the adoption of this creed throughout the Empire, and banished those bishops who refused to accept it.[1]

The elder Gregory, as Bishop of Nazianzus, signed this deceptive document, not, we may be sure, from fear —for he always proved himself to be a brave man— but because he was untrained in theology, and did not

[1] See Mansi, *Collect. Conc. III.* 293-316; Socrates, *H. E.* ii. 37; Sozomen, *H. E.* iv. 17; Theodoret, *H. E.* ii. 15.

see through the Arian machinations. Thereupon the monks in his diocese were thrown into the wildest excitement. They probably knew far less theology even than their bishop, but they regarded themselves always as infallible judges of orthodoxy, and held (in this instance rightly) that anything which fell short of Athanasianism must be erroneous. The hitherto happy and peaceful diocese was threatened with dangerous schism. It was under these circumstances that Gregory came forward (A.D. 360) as a peacemaker between his father and the monks. In an oration yet extant[1] he uses his high authority to plead that his father had always been perfectly orthodox, and "with a mind unstained by the heretical ink," had at once retracted the error into which he had been led by unsuspecting simplicity. At the same time he praises the monks for a zeal which, if it had been excessive and mistaken in its manifestations, had yet been kindled by ardent love for the true faith.[2] In this matter Gregory was successful in speedily restoring that peace among Christians which was dearest to his heart.[3]

The Christmas of 361 witnessed a memorable event in the life of Gregory. According to the extraordinary custom of that day, he was suddenly seized, and compelled by his father and the assembled congregation to

[1] *Orat.* vi.

[2] Gregory strongly disapproved of the tendency to fanatical turbulence which we find again and again in the monks of this epoch. He calls them reasonable and moderate in other matters, but in questions of orthodoxy πολεμικοί τε καὶ δύσμαχοι, and speaks of their ζήλου θερμότης. *Orat.* xxi. 25; comp. xviii. 18.

[3] Some expressions in *Orat.* xviii. 18, have led to the inference that Gregory as well as his father subscribed to the decrees of the Council of Rimini. But Gregory was not then a bishop, and if he had signed the error would certainly have been cast in his teeth by his many enemies in later times. He merely says, "we," in a rhetorical way, "ut de culpâ *velut* communi loquatur."

accept ordination. We witness the same scenes in the life of Augustine. Possidius tells us that such a course was quite usual, and we learn from the letters of Basil that nothing could prevent it except an oath to the contrary.[1] But Gregory's repugnance to this "spiritual tyranny," as he calls it, was neither imaginary nor official.[2] The step which had been taken grieved him, and in an outburst of deep feeling, at the Feast of the Epiphany 362, he fled to Basil in Pontus. There calmer and better thoughts prevailed. He felt that he had taken a blameworthy step and "ran again into the abyss, fearing the groan of his father's indignation."[3] By the Easter of 362 he was back in Nazianzus, and preached his first sermon on Easter Sunday.[4] At the beginning of his sermon he says that Easter should be a time of Christian reconciliation. He will therefore address them as brothers, even those who hate him, and much more those who love him, though they have acted tyrannically in forcing him into the presbyterate. They on their part must pardon him for his flight; since a little sincere reluctance to obey so awful a call, such as was shown by Moses and Jeremiah, may have its good side, no less than the readiness of Aaron and Isaiah.

This slight allusion, however, proved to be insufficient. There were some who severely blamed him for instability and frivolity, while others charged him with being afraid of Julian,[5] others with contempt for the spiritual

[1] *Vit. August.* iv. Many instances are mentioned in Bingham's *Antiquities*, bk. iv. secs. 1-5.

[2] *Carm.* xi. 345: *οὕτω μὲν οὖν ἤλγησα τῇ τυραννίδι. . . .*

[3] *Carm.* xi. 361.

[4] He alludes to his ordination at Christmas, his flight at Epiphany, and his return at Easter by saying (*Orat.* i. 2) *μυστήριον ἔχρισέ με, μυστηρίῳ μικρὸν ὑπεχώρησα . . . μυστηρίῳ καὶ συνεισέρχομαι.*

[5] So I infer from his saying *καὶ τὸν μὲν ἔξωθεν οὐ δέδοικα πόλεμον, οὐδὲ τὸν νῦν ἐπαναστάντα θῆρα ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις καὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ τὸ πλή-*

office. Others, again, with deeper malice said that he had retired in disgust because he had not at once been appointed a bishop. He thought it necessary to notice these charges, and he did so in his second sermon, of which possibly the apologetic part only was delivered. He there opens his heart to his people, and enters fully into the motives by which he had been actuated. First of all, he says, he was so much taken by surprise that his ordination had come on him like a thunderstroke, and confused his good sense. Secondly, he was deeply devoted to a career of solitude, to which he had vowed himself at a perilous moment of his life. Thirdly—though he does not feel sure that he can press this reason—he was ashamed of the low moral standard of the majority of the clergy. He blushed for the many who, though in no respect better — and often much worse — than their fellows, thrust themselves into the Holiest with unwashed hands and unconsecrated hearts, and administered the duties of the altar before they were worthy of the humblest spiritual offices. But fourthly, and this was his strongest reason, he felt himself unworthy of the presbyterate. This leads him to describe at full length the duties of a presbyter. He ought to be an example to all other Christians, and not only free from all vices, but a striver after the perfection of all virtues. Then how great ought to be his knowlege of the souls of men in all their diversity; how deep his insight into all Christian truths; how incessant his assiduity, of which St. Paul alone was an adequate example! The "priest," as Gregory most often calls him, "is the servant of God our Saviour, and no one is worthy of this great God, our sacrifice and High Priest, unless he has first of all brought

ρωμα. The "wild beast" and the "plenitude of the devil" is Julian (*Orat.* ii. 87).

himself as a living and holy offering to God." So far from despising the office bestowed upon him, Gregory honoured it so much as to be afraid of it; but he was not afraid of any outward danger connected with it, least of all of "that rending wild beast (Julian) who is now raging against the Church."[1]

Having thus given the reasons for his flight, Gregory proceeds to give the reasons for his return. They were —first, his yearning for the Church at Nazianzus, which loved him and wished for him; secondly, the care for his aged parents, who were more bowed down by his absence than by their years; thirdly, the example of holy men, who had shown him that no one has a right to resist the call of God. A fourth reason, not mentioned in his sermon, but in a letter to Basil, was that the times were full of error, and that the faithful had a right to rely on the exertions of those who had so many advantages of education and position.

The sermon silenced for a time the busy voices of detraction, but we are sorry to find Gregory complaining soon afterwards that the Nazianzenes were already beginning to tire of his sermons and to show indifference to his person. They had been very eager to secure him, but when they had succeeded, they valued the prize at little worth.[2]

Julian was now Emperor, and many dangers threatened the Church. Christianity had been in possession of the imperial power for more than fifty years, and the Christians, if not the most numerous, were among the most distinguished subjects of the Empire. Julian was

[1] Gregory's remarks on the awful responsibility of the presbyterate have furnished a model to Chrysostom, Gregory the Great, and many other writers.

[2] *Orat.* iii. πρὸς τοὺς καλέσαντας καὶ μὴ ἀπαντήσαντας

animated by the bitterest hostility towards them. He did not wish to persecute them openly, for he was not naturally cruel, and he well knew that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church." Moreover, open persecution would have been impossible. He could not hope to root out by violence a faith which had stamped itself on every institution, and of which the signs were everywhere visible from the banners of the army to the signet-rings of private citizens. But he used every means in his power to depress and insult the faith. He would not allow Christians to be called anything but Galileans.[1] He wrote against them. He removed their insignia from the standards of the Empire and from all public places. He spoke of them in public and in private with the utmost scorn. He had his statues surrounded with images of Zeus, and Ares, and Hermes, so that when Christians paid the customary reverence to him by bowing to his statue they might be guilty of semblable apostasy. When the oath of allegiance to him was taken by the soldiery, he was surrounded by idolatrous emblems, and before him lay gold and incense. If a soldier were a Pagan, or if, being a Christian, he went so far as to fling incense into the flame to the gods, the Emperor gave him a gracious look and a large sum of money; and thus many were tempted to sell their faith.[2] He surrounded himself with Pagan sophists, rhetoricians, and philosophers.[3] He degraded the clergy from all judicial positions, withdrew their exemptions from State

[1] A proof, says Gregory, how honourable the name of Christian must be!

[2] Greg. *Orat.* iv. 82-85; Sozomen, iii. 17. The story is probably a little coloured.

[3] His adulation of these favourites was extravagant. When the sophist Maximus came to Constantinople, Julian broke off important public business to go and meet him. He told Libanius that he hoped to be worthy of his friendship. He put Iamblichus above the most venerated sages of antiquity, and said that one of his letters was more valuable than

burdens, forbade them to exercise the rights (which it must be confessed they had abused) of drawing up wills and receiving legacies.[1] He endeavoured in every possible case to destroy their churches or forfeit them for heathen temples. He robbed the Church of Edessa of its property on the plea that "it was hard for those that had riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven."[2] He recalled the bishops who had been banished, whether for heresy or for orthodoxy, on purpose to foment schisms in all the chief cities of the Empire; and he sometimes summoned the leaders of opposite opinions to discuss their differences in his presence, that he might listen with insulting laughter to their mutual objurgations.[3] Worst of all, he forbade them to teach classical literature. A Christian boy might go to any school he liked and learn Homer and Æschylus and Thucydides; but if he did he should have none but heathen teachers. These great authors, he said, were heathens, and I will not allow them to be taught by men who hate the religion which the ancients professed.[4] "To us," he said, "belong eloquence, the arts of Greece, the worship of the gods; to you nothing but ignorance and rusticity. Such is *your* wisdom." It shows the intensity of his prejudices that Julian could speak thus in the days of an Athanasius, a Jerome, an Ambrose, an Augustine, a Basil, and a Gregory of Nazianzus. But under his pretended fairness he concealed a hearty rancour, and under his ostentatious tolerance a deeply-seated malignity.

all the gold of Lydia. Chrysostom is using rhetorical exaggeration when he describes him as surrounded by criminals of the deepest dye.

[1] Julian, *Ep.* lii.; Sozomen, v. 5.

[2] Julian, *Ep.* xliii.; Socrates, iii. 13. [3] Amm. Marc. xxii. 5.

[4] Even Ammianus Marcellinus (xxv. 4) blames him for this. "Inter quae erat illud inclemens, quod docere vetuit magistros rhetoricos et grammaticos Christianos ni transissent ad numinum cultum."

It may be asked how it could be possible for a prince so able, and in many respects so wise, to have become thus mastered at the age of twenty-four by a passion of hatred for such a faith as Christianity, and to enter on the absurd attempt to galvanise the corpse of an effete idolatry. Perhaps if Julian's books against Christianity had been extant we should have been able to answer the question more clearly.[1] We can see, however, that he was little likely to be attracted by the religion of such a man as Constantius, the murderer of his family, or Eusebius, the temporising courtier; nor did he place the least confidence in the clergy to whom Constantius consigned him. The character of Christ had never been rightly presented to him. George the dishonest pork contractor, who lent him books at Macellum, and Hecebolius the sophist, who, after pretending to be a flaming Christian (*διαπύρως χριστιανίζειν*), became a grim Pagan (*γοργὸς Ἕλλην*), and turning Christian again, "according to the disposition of the Emperors," begged every one to trample on him at the church door[2]—these were not persons likely to charm his youthful susceptibilities. The Christianity which he despised—the only Christianity which he knew—was mainly associated with a superstitious martyrolatry and a grovelling relic-worship. The Galileans, he said, "abandon the worship of the gods to worship the mouldering remains of the dead. They have filled everything with tombs and cenotaphs." "Bone-worshippers" was his scornful phrase for them. "These are the gods whom men worship nowadays," exclaimed the sophist Eunapius, "men called martyrs,

[1] We only possess a few fragments (*Juliani opera*, ed. E. Spanheim, Lips. 1696), and we can hardly judge of the work from the answer of Cyril.

[2] Socr. iii. 13. "Prostrating himself before the church doors, and calling out, 'Trample on me, for I am as salt that has lost his savour!'"

before whose bones, salted and pickled, the monks and the bishops lie grovelling in the dust."[1] The clumsiness with which he had been taught left him under the scornful impression that Christianity was nothing but an ignorant degeneracy from a despised Judaism. On the other hand he had been delighted with the grace and glory of Greek literature, and his favourites were the heroes of Plutarch. He saw Paganism partly through the glamour of fascination which had been flung over it by the masters of eloquence and song, and partly through the haze of philosophic interpretation in which it was enveloped by brilliant rhetoricians like Libanius and Eunapius. The Christianity which he witnessed around him was already degenerate.[2] Its demoralisation had kept pace with its prosperity. Heathen influences had tainted its purity. It was infected with worldliness and corrupted by superstition. The clergy, by the confession of its greatest teachers, had lost in purity as they had grown in power. The celibacy which was enforced by ill-guided public opinion was already prolific of scandals. "We destroyed in our prosperity," says Gregory, "the reputation and power which we acquired in persecutions and afflictions."[3] While Julian admired the rough temperance of cynicism, he despised the self-maceration of turbulent pretenders, who in proportion to their ignorance were always convinced of their own infallibility. What specially disgusted him—the sin which then weakened and disgraced the Church, as it has

[1] With allusion to the memorial banquets, the Christians were tauntingly called *νεκροβόροι*, or corpse-devourers.

[2] Hence he calls it *μωρία*, *ἀπόνοια* (*Ep.* 7). Dorner (*Person of Christ*, ii. 201) mentions the increasing claims of the Papacy; the ceremonial pomp of the *cultus*; the deification of martyrs and saints, introducing a new form of polytheism; the impurity of the view taken of marriage and celibacy; the monastic fleeing from the world; and hierarchical worldliness.

[3] *Orat.* iv. 32.

weakened and disgraced it ever since—was the furious partisanship, the unscrupulous animosity, the savage hatred kindled among Christians by theological, and frequently by unimportant differences. In vain he exhorted Christians to tolerance and the mutually-respected exercise of their religious freedom. He left it as his experience that "the deadliest wild beasts are hardly so savage against human beings as most Christians are against each other."[1] He saw, indeed, the blessedness of many Christian institutions—the care for the dead, the hospitality, the charity for the poor, the solemnity of public worship — but he vainly fancied that he could transplant these hallowed ordinances into the midst of heathendom without the sanction from which they sprang. He was not wise enough to see that Pagan women could not be like the Christian women whom all admired, nor Pagan priests like the nobler portion of the Christian clergy, nor Pagan sophists[2] like such men as Ambrose, Gregory, and Basil. And thus he spoilt the whole meaning of his life by trying to overthrow the religion of eternity and to revive an idolatry so false, so empty, and so dead that even in the grove of Daphne, on the high festival of Apollo, in his most famous and enchanting shrine, no one was found to bring an offering to the God of Day except a single priest who brought a single goose![3] The martyr Babylas monopolised the religious enthusiasm of the Antiochenes, and when his remains were removed by Julian from the consecrated grove of Phoebus, the chariot which carried them was accompanied by vast multitudes, who in the

[1] Amm. Marc. xxi. 5, sec. 4 : "Nullas infestas hominibus bestias ut sunt sibi ferales plerique Christianorum."

[2] On the intercourse of Julian with sophists, see Schlosser, *Weltgeschichte*, i. p. 649 *sqq.*

[3] *Misopogon*, p. 362.

midst of their dances sang in loud tones, "Confounded be all they that worship carved images, which delight in vain gods."

Even Ammianus Marcellinus admits that Julian in his dealings with the Christians was "sometimes unlike himself." But, as Bishop Wordsworth says, it was "the worldliness, the pride, the ambition, the malignity, the craftiness and cruelty of some in high places in the Church which helped to make him an apostate." He was not a violent persecutor, but "oppressed them gently."[1] His chief hatred was concentrated, not upon the ordinary mass of Christians, but on their great leaders, such as Basil and Athanasius.[2] He allowed Caesarius to continue in his post as imperial physician, in spite of his failure to pervert him. In other matters he came but little into contact with the family of Nazianzus. Frequently, however, his officials were more tyrannous than himself. Knowing his desire to turn churches into temples, his imperial commissioner came to Nazianzus with a body of soldiers and archers, and demanded either the cession or the destruction of the church.[3] But the old bishop met him with such a determined front that he hesitated to rouse a tumult, and retired without doing any mishief. The elder Gregory also showed remarkable energy in opposing not only Julian, but his fellow-bishops in the election to the bishopric of Caesarea in 362. Eusebius had been tumultuously elected by the people. Julian opposed the choice because it deprived him of a useful civil servant, and the assembled bishops of the province objected to it because they had not been

[1] ἐπιεικῶς ἐβιάζετο, *Orat.* iv. 79. He states his policy in *Ep.* 7, where he repudiates persecution.

[2] Gregory says that, like the Cyclops, he reserved them for the honour of being devoured last.

[3] Greg. *Orat.* xviii. 22.

consulted. The elder Gregory, on the other hand, though only the bishop of an obscure provincial town, maintained the rights of the people, and wrote so courageous a letter to the governor of the province that both Julian and the bishops gave way, and the choice of Eusebius was confirmed.

After Julian's death, on June 27, 363, Gregory wrote two books against him which are much too severe. If Julian has been absurdly overrated, he has also been unjustly depreciated. In ability he was far superior to Libanius and the other sophists whom he so much reverenced. Niebuhr considered his *Misopogon* to be "one of the most elegant works which Greek literature produced in the period of its second life." He was brave, self-denying, indefatigable; except towards the Christians, he behaved with clemency and justice.[1] Deeply as he was mistaken in his main end, he had the interest of his Empire at heart. He had learnt much of his virtue and wisdom from the religion which he hated, and there seems no ground for believing that he was guilty of the drunkenness and unchastity with which Gregory charges him, but from which, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, he was entirely free. Still less could Julian be justly charged with the assassination of Constantius. But the Christians could not forgive him for turning the world upside down in pursuit of a pestilent chimaera.[2] Had Julian been a Christian his rule might have become pre-eminently blessed; but as an apostate he introduced confusion into cities and provinces, divisions into families, strife into houses, divorce

[1] See Amm. Marc. xxv. 4.

[2] So Greg. Naz. (*Or.* iv. 74) and the Antiochenes said of him: ὅτι παρ' ἐμοῦ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου πράγματα ἀνατέτραπται, *Misopogon*, p. 360.

into marriages, and general terror and misery into the whole condition of the State.[1] He wished to displace the religion which had brought into the world its holiest ideals and noblest progress, and to bring it back into the worship of phantoms and demons who had been the patrons of every vice. This is why Gregory has not one kind word to say of him. He devotes the first of his invectives to a denunciation of his tyranny against Christians, in which he sees the reality of violence under the speciousness of moderation.[2] He remorselessly thrusts the soul of Julian into hell, while he summons from heaven the soul of the contemptible and heretical Constantius ("the most divine and Christ-loving of Emperors") to load him with praises. He only finds it difficult to excuse him for his "inhuman humanity"[3] in elevating Julian —whom in the fashion of the day he sometimes calls Idolian. He reproaches Julian for superstitious credulity, and calls him *καυσίταυρος*, "the bull-burner," while he tells stories about him which are credulously superstitious. He says that Julian once found a crowned cross in the entrails of the victim; and that once, while he was hidden in a hole to carry out his theurgic practices, the demons whom he had invoked burst violently upon him, and he took refuge at the cross which he had denied. Gregory calls him not only an "Apostate," but a "universal enemy," a "general murderer," an "Assyrian," a "dragon," and "the worst of evils."[4] He says that he was accompanied by hosts of demons to his Persian war. The hatred of Gregory for Julian was felt still more strongly by the common multitude. The news of his death was received at Antioch with a burst

[1] Greg. *Orat.* iv. 75.
[2] *Orat.* iv. 79.
[3] *Ἀπάνθρωπος φιλανθρωπία*, *Orat.* iv. 35.
[4] *πρῶτον κακόν*, *Orat.* xviii. 32.

of indecent exultation. The theatres proclaimed the victory of the Cross amid their impure spectacles, and the churches and memorials of the martyrs were profaned by unseemly dances.[1]

History has learnt to judge Julian more fairly. It discounts the passionate abuse of religious fury. Gregory himself cannot but admit that as Emperor he ruled with moderation (*μετρίως*), and was not a persecutor.[2] Even the Christian poet Prudentius acknowleges as fully as the Pagan Aurelius Victor that he was a brave warrior, an able legislator, and a sincere patriot, and says of him that, though he loved 300,000 gods, he meant well to the world—

> "Ore manuque
> Consultus patriae, sed non consultus habendae
> Religionis, amans ter centum millia Divum;
> Perfidus ille Deo sed non et perfidus orbi."[3]

Still the great fact remains that the answer of the Christian to the scornful question, "What is the Galilean carpenter doing now?" was true. He was "making a coffin"—the coffin of Julian's greatness.[4] There is no sufficient evidence that, in the moment of his fall, Julian exclaimed, "Thou hast conquered, oh Galilean!"[5] or reproached the gods, and especially the sun. But these and similar stories about his last words do but indicate

[1] Theodoret, *H. E.* iii. 27.

[2] He says *βιάζεσθαι τυραννικῶς αἰσχυνόμενος*, *Orat.* iv. 79.

[3] Prudent. *Apoth.* 430.

[4] Theodoret, *H. E.* iii. 23.

[5] *Νενίκηκας Γαλιλαῖε*, Theodoret, *H. E.* iii. 25; comp. Sozom. vi. 2. Philostorgius (vii. 15) says that he sprinkled his blood towards the sun, and said *κορέσθητι*, "Be satisfied!" at the same time calling the other gods "evil and destroyers." It was believed that his death was simultaneously revealed to Basil, to Didymus, to Julian Sabbas (who heard a mysterious voice cry, "The wild boar has ceased to live"). De Broglie, v. 434. He might have added to the Abbot Theodore at Tabenne, who at once informed Athanasius (see *supra*, p. 564).

the historic feeling that in his case the prophecy had been conspicuously fulfilled, "He that falleth upon this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall it will scatter him as dust." Julian's absolute failure was the worst punishment of his aberration. He taunted the old Bishop Maris of Chalcedon with his blindness, but he was the blinder of the two. His unfortunate conception of substituting for Christianity a reformed Paganism, swathed in the illuminated mist of the Neo-Platonic philosophy, rendered unavailing alike his talents and his labours. Nothing could be achieved by that moonlight phantom. Not one conquest, not one law, not one great work has survived him. His eloquence, his generalship, his efforts, were stricken with sterility. His utmost influence had only tended to galvanise polytheism with the spasmodic quiverings which were premonitory of final dissolution. Athanasius in his burning deserts, Basil in his Pontic seclusion, were greater powers than Julian on the throne of the Caesars.[1] The rival of Marcus Aurelius did less for suffering humanity than the father of the unhappy Crispus. He loosed the bands of no oppression, he broke the fetters of no slave. The gods who went forth with his host led him to the plains where he forfeited his life and Rome her glory. The curse of Paganism blighted the happiest gifts of her last hero, and paralysed all that he attempted to achieve.[2]

[1] In point of fact Julian's ruin was due in no small degree to the alienation which his apostasy had caused to Tiranus and his brave Armenians. Insulted and disgusted, the Armenian contingent deserted him, and he perished—perhaps (so the heathen historian asserted) by the guilty arrow of a Christian.

[2] See De Broglie, iv. 406 *sqq.* The word "Pagan" is first used in a *legal* sense by Valentinian I. (A.D. 368), but it began to be common in the reign of Julian, because the heathens were chiefly strong in the country districts (*pagi*). Ducange, s. v. *Pagani.*

And gazing on this catastrophe many a Pagan, who had been attracted by the divine beauty of Christian doctrine, might have been more than ever ready to exclaim with the poet—

"Oh, ye vain false gods of Hellas,
Ye are silent evermore,
And I dash down this old chalice
Whence libations ran of yore.
See the wine crawls in the dust,
Wormlike, as your glories must,
Since Pan is dead!"

XII

Continued

THE BREACH WITH BASIL

"And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.
Each spoke words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother."

COLERIDGE.

SECTION IV

In 363 Basil had been ordained presbyter against his will by Eusebius, Exarch of Caesarea, who, like other bishops of the day, felt the extreme importance of utilising the talents of the ablest young men for the service of the Church. It was pre-eminently necessary for a bishop like Eusebius, who knew little or nothing of theology, and whose election had been much disputed, to have by his side a thinker and speaker like Basil. But misunderstandings soon arose between them. Eusebius was overshadowed by his splendid presbyter, and perhaps there was on one side a little touch of human jealousy and on the other of human pride.[1] Eusebius went so far as actually to deprive Basil of the presbyterate to which he had forced him. A schism

[1] So Gregory implies, *Orat.* xliii. 28.

might have followed had not Basil been noble enough to follow the wise advice of Gregory—to efface himself, and to retire to his Pontic solitude, whither, for a short time, Gregory accompanied him. On his return he earnestly laboured to reconcile the angry bishop with his deeply wounded presbyter. In 364 the brief rule of Jovian ended, and the accession of the Arian Valens rendered the position of Eusebius a dangerous one. He frequently invited the help of Gregory at his conferences and synods. Gregory answered with firm courtesy that he felt honoured by these invitations, but could not approve of the conduct of Eusebius towards his friend Basil. "In honouring me and despising him," he writes, "you remind me of a person who with one hand strokes a man's head, and with the other slaps his face; or who builds the foundations of a house while he is destroying its walls. If I have any influence with you, pray be reconciled to Basil. Grant me this favour. If you treat him honourably, you will receive similar treatment at his hands."[1] Eusebius was not unnaturally offended by this letter. He thought that the tone of the young provincial towards him was not sufficiently respectful. Gregory replied, with great independence and dignity, that the freedom of a friend was better than the flattery of an enemy. He had not written in a spirit of insolence, but as a Christian philosopher; and if Eusebius judges of the letter as though it were written by a servant, as one who dared not look at him, Gregory will bend to the scourge and will not weep.[2] Eusebius accepted the apology, and, moved by the urgent need of the Church, forgave Basil. Gregory wrote to tell his

[1] *Ep.* xvii.

[2] *Ep.* xvii. οὐχ ὑβριστικῶς ἐπέστειλα μᾶλλον ὥσπερ ἐμέμψω τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, ἢ πνευματικῶς τε καὶ φιλοσόφως.

friend that he would soon receive from his bishop a kindly letter, and urges him to anticipate it by a magnanimous submission, promising, if he wishes it, to accompany him to Caesarea and there to help him in fighting for the truth.[1] To the bishop Gregory wrote: "Since you wish it, I will come and pray with you, fight with you, serve with you, and will encourage you with my cheers as the eager boys urge on a gallant athlete."[2] His conduct throughout the whole affair was singularly noble.

Basil returned to Caesarea in 365, and for five years became in reality bishop, while Eusebius retained the name. He occupied at Caesarea the position which Hildebrand occupied at Rome under the Popes who preceded him. He was, as it were, "the keeper of the lion."[3] He made himself indispensable, and while he did not again offend the sensitive dignity of Eusebius, he made his episcopacy effective. He distinguished himself by his benevolent exertions during a famine, and bravely maintained the Nicene faith in despite of Valens, the Arian Emperor.

In 370 Eusebius died.

Basil was now forty-one, and (if the letter be genuine) he wrote at once to Gregory to help him in getting the metropolitan see filled by a worthy successor. He said that he had such a man in view, whom Gregory knew well; and probably he meant to imply Gregory himself.[4] Gregory declined to come, and then

[1] *Ep.* xix. [2] *Ep.* xviii.

[3] *Orat.* xliii. 33: οἷον λεοντοκόμος τὶς ἦν τέχνῃ τιθασεύων τὸν δυναστεύοντα.

[4] It is now however generally considered that this letter, printed among those of Basil, is really a letter of the elder Gregory to Eusebius of Samosata (Greg. *Ep.* xlii.) In letter xli., written by the elder Gregory to the Church of Caesarea, he began with touching humility, εἰμὶ μὲν

received another letter from Basil, saying that he was dangerously ill and longed to see him. Deeply moved, Gregory prepared to start at once, but meanwhile was informed that Basil was in his usual health! It at once flashed across his mind that Basil had deceived him, and wished to secure his presence that he might aid him in his desire to be elected bishop. He wrote him a bitterly reproachful letter for what he judged to be deceit for ambitious ends, and advised him to withdraw from the excited city.[1] Meanwhile he did his best for his friend by writing two letters in his father's name to the clergy and people of Caesarea. The elder Gregory, in spite of the burdens of age, was so interested in the matter that he travelled to Caesarea in person; and he was so delighted at the election of Basil, that he came back looking many years younger.[2] But for this self-sacrifice on the part of the aged bishop a great career would have been frustrated. For three consecrating bishops were necessary, and until he came only two were ready to perform the office.

The misunderstanding caused by Basil's manœuvres at this crisis was the first break in a true and close friendship; but it was a serious one. Gregory thought that Basil had been dishonest in his conduct, and Basil that Gregory was indifferent, although it is certain that Basil would not have been elected but for the active exertions of the two Gregories.[3] Gregory wrote him a letter of congratulation, but did not come in person, because he thought that Basil's

ποιμὴν ὀλίγος καὶ ποιμνίου μικροῦ προεστηκώς, but he pleads the freedom of God's grace and the privilege of his gray hairs.

[1] *Ep.* xl. He ends with the words that on fitting opportunity *ὀνειδίσω γε πλείονα καὶ βαρύτερα.*

[2] *Ep.* xliv. The circumstances are narrated in the Life of Basil.

[3] *Orat.* xviii. 36, xliii. 37.

many enemies and slanderers might say that he was trying to surround himself with his own partisans.[1] Basil would not accept the excuse, and said that evidently Gregory took no interest in his concerns. Gregory wrote back indignantly. "How can you say," he wrote, "that your affairs are to me a mere abandoned gleaning, oh divine and sacred head?[2] What speech is this which has escaped 'the barrier of your teeth?' or how did you venture to say this? How did your understanding start that way, or the ink write it, or the paper accept it? Oh, discourses, and Athens, and virtues, and literary toils! For you almost make me a tragedian by what you write. Do you not know me, oh yourself, oh eye of the world, great voice and trumpet, palace (*βασίλειον*) of eloquence! Are your interests slight in my eyes? How can any one admire anything on earth, if Gregory does not admire you? There is one spring among the seasons, one sun among the stars, one all-encompassing heaven, and one voice among all—yours, if I am any judge at all, and if—which I do not think—my love for you does not deceive me."

Soon afterwards Gregory had an opportunity of showing that his words were sincere, for, hearing that Basil was involved in quarrels and difficulties with the civil power, he at once wrote and promised to come to him.[3] Basil offered him the position of chief presbyter at Caesarea, but the offer was declined.[4]

But worse remained. In 370 Valens, the Arian Emperor, for his own purposes divided Cappadocia into two provinces, and Basil in vain attempted to secure the ecclesiastical unity of his diocese in spite of the civil

[1] *Ep.* xxiv.
[2] *Ep.* 2: *πῶς ἐπιφυλλὶς ἡμῖν τὰ σά*; comp. *Ep.* 10.
[3] *Ep.* xlvii. [4] *Orat.* xliii. 39.

division. Tyana became the capital of the second division, and its worldly ambitious bishop, Anthimus, was at once brought into conflict with his former metropolitan. With a great deal of unctuous talk about "spiritual sons," and "souls," and "the word of faith" (easy concealments of greed),[1] he went so far as to intercept for his own purposes some of Basil's revenues which were passing through the mountain passes at Sasima, and even to seize Basil's mules for his own use.[2] He excused himself with the remark that "tribute ought not to be paid to *heterodox persons.*" "Every one who vexes another," acutely remarks Gregory, "is *heterodox.*"[3]

Basil, in order to strengthen his own metropolitical claims, appointed new bishops in addition to his fifty *chorepiscopi* in the smaller towns of Cappadocia. These *chorepiscopi* hardly had the position of the rectors of our small country towns, and were nominated from very ordinary presbyters. There was one particularly undesirable town on the borders of the two dioceses, for which Anthimus and Basil were both contending. It was named Sasima. It was in a rocky country, thirty-two miles from Tyana and twenty-four from Nazianzus. It was herbless, waterless, insignificant, and dusty; and being at the meeting-point of three roads, it was intolerably noisy, with a floating population of drivers, ostlers, and commercial travellers. It was in fact a sort of

[1] *Orat.* xliii. 58: καὶ ἡ σκῆψις ὡς εὐπρεπής· τὰ γὰρ πνευματικὰ τέκνα, καί αἱ ψυχαί, καὶ ὁ τῆς πίστεως λόγος, καὶ ταῦτα τὰ τῆς ἀπληστίας ἐπικαλύμματα.

[2] *Orat.* xliii. 58, *Ep.* xlvii. Gregory seems to have accompanied Basil to the foot of Mount Taurus, and to have suffered personally in this encounter. *Ep.* 50; *Carm.* xi. 453: καὶ δεινὸν οὐδὲν τραύματ' ηὐλογημένα.

[3] *Orat.* xliii. 58: 'μὴ χρῆναι δασμοφορεῖν κακοδόξοις'· πᾶς γὰρ ὁ λυπῶν κακόδοξος.

station for changing horses, and was nothing but dust, noises, cries, groans, agents, and horse-trappings.[1] Added to this, there was hardly any place where there was so little opportunity for spiritual influence, and the income was so wretched that its bishop could not possibly have it in his power to practise his ordinary duties of benevolence and activity.[2] If the place required a bishop at all, in order to support Basil's claim as metropolitan against his rival at Tyana, the sort of man to choose for it would have been some rough, sturdy, commonplace presbyter, who might have some sympathies with the flitting population among whom his lot would be cast. Assuredly eloquence, refinement, and theological profundity would be thrown away in such a place.

And this was the bishopric for which Basil selected his equal in age and fame, his superior in eloquence and learning, his lifelong friend; the ablest, the most refined, the most painfully sensitive man of his acquaintance; the man who had smoothed his path at Athens, had saved him from dialectic defeat, had guided him by his counsels; who had shared his hours of study and his monastic loneliness, who had reconciled him with his offended bishop, who had done more than any man to secure his election to the throne of Caesarea! Gregory found himself nominated by Basil to be bishop of the detestable village, which, with intense scorn, he calls

[1] *Carm.* xi. *de Vit.* 439-446—

ἄνυδρος, ἄχλους, οὐ δόλως ἐλεύθερος
δεινῶς ἀπευκτὸν καὶ στενὸν κωμύδριον,
κόνις τὰ πάντα, καὶ ψόφοι, σὺν ἅρμασιν
θρῆνοι, στεναγμοί, πράκτορες, στρέβλαι, πέδαι,
λαὸς δ' ὅσοι ξένοι τε καὶ πλανώμενοι,
Αὕτη Σασίμων τῶν ἐμῶν ἐκκλησία.

[2] *Carm.* xi. 470: *μηδ' ἄρτον ἔξων τῷ ξένῳ διακλάσαι.* An extraordinary bitterness, even after the lapse of years, breathes through Gregory's reminiscences of this blow to his friendship and his happiness.

"the illustrious Sasima." "This," he exclaims, "is what has come of Athens, and our common studies, and our common life, and the marvel of our friendship, and our common vows. It is all scattered to the winds! all dashed to the ground! Let me fly to the wild beasts; even they, I think, are more to be trusted."[1]

What could have been Basil's motive? It is impossible to excuse conduct which, if any other man had been guilty of it, we should have called so unfriendly, so ungrateful, so insulting, so impolitic, so grossly uncalled for and unfair. If Basil had deliberately set about to think how he could most cruelly insult and humiliate the delicate and shrinking nature of his friend, how he could most effectually quench his light, break off from his devoted and disinterested friendship, quench his spirits, and render his unequalled talents useless to the Church and even to Basil himself, he could not have taken any step more effectual for these ends than this blundering and almost brutal appointment. Had Gregory been trained under the sort of iron discipline which Ignatius Loyola established, he might have viewed matters differently. But neither was Basil a Loyola nor Gregory a Xavier. It poisoned Gregory's whole life. It hung about him like an evil shadow. It materially impaired his usefulness, it wholly destroyed his peace. To forgive it required an immense magnanimity, and though Gregory did

[1] *Carm.* xi. 476-486—

τοιαῦτ' Ἀθῆναι καὶ πόνοι κοινοὶ λόγων
ὁμοστεγός τε καὶ συνέστιος βίος
νοῦς εἷς ἐν ἀμφοῖν, οὐ δύω, θαῦμ' Ἑλλάδος . . .
διεσκέδασται πάντα, ἔῤῥιπται χαμαί . . .
ποῦ τις πλανηθῇ· θῆρες οὐ δέξεσθέ με;
παρ' οἷς τὸ πιστὸν πλεῖον, ὥς γ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ.

forgive it in time, and even tried to make excuses for Basil's motives, it was certain that after so cruel a wrong their friendship could be but little more than the embalmed corpse of the past. What could have induced Basil to act thus never can be known; probably he lost sight of everything else in his one immediate purpose, and, like so many other men, identified what was *right* with his own views for the supposed good of his diocese. But it was one of the worst mistakes of his life. He stabbed to the heart the happiness of the friend who adored and trusted him, and to whom he owed the best things that he possessed. No one I think can read the correspondence between these two great men without seeing that the chief warmth of the friendship, and all its unselfishness, and all the services rendered, were on Gregory's side. The insatiable demands, the constant reproaches, the selfishly indifferent pursuit of his own ecclesiastical ends, were all on the side of Basil. Was he jealous of Gregory? Did he want to punish him for not coming more prominently forward at his election? Or, now that he had become a Metropolitan and an Exarch with fifty bishops under him, was he merely acting like a lordly ecclesiastic who forgets the friends of his earlier days and thinks only of his own accidental and inch-high grandeur? We can only hope not, in spite of conduct which, as Gregory says, broke down his philosophy and Christian equanimity more completely than any incident of his life. He looked on it as a betrayal of everything which he had a right to expect, and he does not hesitate to accuse Basil of being puffed up with episcopal conceit. It was the bitterest trial of his life. Deeply was he wounded in the house of his friends! Basil, so far from understanding the grief of his heart, actually charged with sloth and cold-

ness the man to whom he was so deeply indebted, and whom he had so greatly wronged! Gregory had a right to complain that because Basil had been put over his head he simply sacrificed him, without so much as a second thought, for his own polemical interests. Nor was Gregory alone in his complaints. Many of his friends charged Basil with designing selfishness. A few expressions of Gregory's letters will show the intensity of his feelings, and the rough way in which Basil dealt with them. "Will you not cease abusing (*βλασφημῶν*) me as ill-trained, and ill-conditioned, and unfriendly, and not even fit to live, because I have dared to see through the treatment I have received from you? The most ludicrous or the most pitiable part of the matter is that I am at once wronged and abused. . . . Even the kindliest persons complain of your arrogance and contempt, and that I have been first used, then cast aside like the most dishonoured and useless vessels." He tells Basil that if he wants to fight Anthimus he must do so himself. Gregory is not going to fight for sucking pigs and chickens as if they were men's souls or Church canons, and he warns Basil not to sweep everything into his own lap, as the rivers or the mountain torrents, to swell his own glory.

But Basil would not give way. He came to Nazianzus to consecrate Gregory, and the latter, feeling himself no longer master of his own will, and crushed by bitter disappointment, yielded in despair. In the church which his father had built, Basil "led him into the midst, and taking him by the hand, while he held back in vain, seated him by his side. Then he anointed him, clothed him in the ephod, put the mitre round his forehead, led him to the altar of the spiritual holocaust, sacrificed the calf of initiation, consecrated his hands to the Spirit, and

led him into the sanctuary to be a bishop of the saints."[1] There Gregory preached in the presence of Basil and his father. "Once more," he said, "has a consecration and the Spirit come upon me, and once more I go on my way sad and downcast." Yet his elevation was due, he added, not to persuasion but to force. He condemned, however — ironically or otherwise — his own "self-will" and "want of sense," and thanks his "highly-honoured friend" for his kindness and unique affection in not suffering him to bury his talent in the earth. But he wrote to Basil that he should gain one thing from the whole matter, which was to trust henceforth not to his friend but to God alone.[2] "How hotly," he writes, "and how like a horse you leap about in your letters! Nor is it surprising that you want to display to us what glory you have recently acquired, that so you may make yourself more august. But if you are too ostentatious and ambitious, and discourse to me condescendingly, like a metropolitan to persons of small cities or none at all, I too can oppose pride to pride. For this is easily in any one's power, and is perhaps more reasonable."[3]

Gregory was not a strong character. His shrinking sensitiveness, his longing for retirement and contemplation, his inability to resist immediate pressure, unfitted him for contest with more worldly and imperious natures. In allowing himself to be consecrated in order to get rid of weary refusals he was guilty of an act of weakness which he must always have regretted. It laid him open to the charge of vacillation

[1] *Orat.* x. 4. This language of Jewish metaphor helped the growth of many errors.

[2] *Ep.* xviii. ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦτο μόνον κερδανοῦμεν τῆς σῆς φιλίας, τὸ μὴ πιστεύειν φίλοις.

[3] *Ep.* 50: ὡς θερμὸν ἐξάλλῃ καὶ πωλικὸν ἐν τοῖς γράμμασιν.

and of neglect of canonical laws, and was the cause of much future trouble. In vain Gregory of Nyssa came to console his sorely-wounded spirit.[1] After the consecration, he fled in an agony of vexation into the solitude which he loved, and even after his return it does not appear that he even so much as visited Sasima, where at any rate he never performed a single episcopal act.[2] He flatly refused to learn the art of war or to fight the martial Anthimus.[3] Yet he was by no means free from trouble on that account. Anthimus, with other bishops of the Tyanean diocese, came to Nazianzus nominally to visit the elder Gregory, really to cajole or intimidate the Bishop of Sasima into acknowledging him as his metropolitan. He failed in this, and angrily charged Gregory with "Basilism." He then induced him to attempt a mediation between the sees of Tyana and Caesarea. In this Gregory failed, for Basil refused all advances on the part of Anthimus, and Gregory reproved him for being unregardful of what was due to others.[4] At last, tired of being a footstool to be knocked about between two jealous bishops,[5] and feeling the impossibility of any usefulness in a horse-station like Sasima, the much burdened man fled once more to a convalescent home in the lonely hills[6] to revel in the silence and solitude which alone he loved.[7] He refused

[1] *Orat.* xi. 3 : προσημερώσων. [2] *Carm.* ix. *de Vit.* 530 *sqq.*

[3] *Ep.* xlviii. [4] *Ep.* 50.

[5] *Ep.* 50 : "What sense is there in my coming into collision with him on your account, and at the same time displeasing you as though I favoured him?"

[6] *Vit. Greg. Naz.* p. 139 : εἰς φροντιστήριον ἀσθενῶν.

[7] *Carm. de Vit.* 490—

πάλιν φυγάς τε καὶ δρομαῖος εἰς ὄρος,
κλέπτων φίλην δίαιταν, ἐντρύφημ' ἐμόν.

He says to Basil (*Ep.* 49) that he declines to be treated "like a bone flung to dogs," and ἐμοὶ δὲ μεγίστη πρᾶξις ἐστὶν ἡ ἀπραξία.

to obey his father's entreaties that he would go to his hated bishopric and there "be choked with mud"; but he could not refuse to come back to Nazianzus, and there, to use his own metaphor, sustain the wings of the strong but weary eagle. The Arian violences of Valens made it necessary that his aged father should have assistance in maintaining the strength of Cappadocia as "a bulwark of the faith." He returned in 372, and in his first sermon promised to help him in duties which forbade the indulgence of spiritual ease. He recognised the irresistible guidance of the Spirit, to which he must sacrifice his own inclinations, and now began to work regularly as coadjutor bishop to his father, but refused to promise that he would succeed him. Since Basil had merely nominated him to Sasima by his own imperious will, without any consultation with his suffragans, and with no reference to the wishes of the people, he might fairly consider that the appointment was null and void. He was a bishop without a see.

It may be thought that neither Basil nor Gregory appear in their best light in these transactions, and some will ask whether we are justified in thus judging the conduct of Saints and Fathers. I will meet the question directly. As for the title "Saints," it is only Scriptural in the sense in which it is used of all true and sincere Christians. Neither Basil, nor Gregory, nor Jerome, nor the few hundreds or thousands more who have received from Popes the honour of canonisation were one whit truer Saints than are millions of the faithful who have not been famous. To pray to them, as though they were ubiquitous, is idolatry; to ask their intercessions is to assume that dead men are more likely to hear us than the living God. Nothing is more arbitrary, more incomplete, or less authoritative than the title "Saint,"

as used in the Eastern and Western Church. It is given to the heroes of faith in the New Testament, and not to those in the Old. It is monopolised by Romanists and denied to Protestants. It is given to such a man as Cyril, and denied to such a man as Origen; it is given to such a man as Thomas à Becket, and denied to such a man as Tyndale; it is given to such a man as Alphonso Liguori, and denied to such a man as Savonarola, or Huss, or Howard, or Wesley. And, generally, it is indeed most delightful to dwell upon men's virtues and not upon their faults—"in viris egregiis bona potius quaerere et laudare quam mala indagare et reprehendere." But when we are humbly studying for our learning the lives of great and good men, we lose the whole lesson of their lives, the whole encouragement of their examples, if we represent each of them as

"A faultless monster which the world ne'er saw."

It is one thing to turn upon them the light of unsympathetic or malignant criticism, and quite another to recognise their faults and errors as they themselves set them forth in their writings and actions. To conceal failings, to represent faults as virtues, is to falsify history, to pervert the facts which are God's words, and to render valueless the lessons of biography as one of the teachers of mankind.

Again, the word "Fathers" is misused and misunderstood. No self-deception can be more wilful than that which sends us to learn our theology and take our conceptions of the truth of God exclusively from the writings of men who in learning, knowledge, insight, and genius were not in the smallest degree superior to thousands who in age after age have succeeded them; who were without the advantage of that vastly-

accumulating knowledge with which God has taught us by the light of history and the experience of mankind; and whose pages, wise and noble as many of them are, yet furnish the most glaring proofs of their incompetence to be regarded as finally authoritative in every particular on the faith of Christendom. To say that the fourth century possessed a larger share of inspiration, or a more certain character of truth than the nineteenth, is to be faithless towards the promise that Christ would be with us always even to the end of the world. To say that the Fathers had a light of tradition, which for us has long been quenched, is to fly in the face of obvious facts. If tradition be of any value, it is so most in the first, second, and third centuries; and if we test it by the earliest Christian writings—by the Epistles of Barnabas, the Pastor of Hermas, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, the writings of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus—we find it to be erroneous —erroneous by the confession of universal Christendom—alike in Scriptural interpretation, in theological doctrine, and in matters of the simplest fact. If there be one thing which is more likely than another to prove a source of desperate peril to Christianity, it is the tendency to confuse the faith of the Gospel with the manifold perversions and exaggerations of the fourth and fifth centuries, and to look for the water which springeth to eternal life not in the pure and limpid fountain of Christ's teaching, but in what our Homilies call the "stinking puddles of human tradition." Basil, and Gregory, and Jerome, and Augustine were holy men; but they were by no means free from tendencies of doctrine wherein lay the germ of those mediaeval corruptions to which the Articles of the Church of England give the name of "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."

But if Basil was arrogant and Gregory querulous, it is pleasant to know that time brought healing thoughts and more of mutual forbearance. Their friendship had been very deep, and even the corpse of it was worth embalming. Gregory was always ready to help his friend, and on one occasion he publicly defended Basil's orthodoxy against an arrogant monk, who charged him with being in error respecting the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. The monk had heard Basil preach on the Godhead of the Father and the Son, but he had not given the title of God to the Holy Ghost. Gregory positively asserted his friend's belief, and gave reasons for his conduct. But Basil once more took offence at the letter in which Gregory narrated the incident.[1] Basil seems to have thought that Gregory had defended him too timidly and not skilfully. "If long friendship has not sufficed," he wrote, "to make my brethren understand my views, of what use can a single letter be?"[2] It required all the forbearance of the Bishop of Sasima to prevent fresh complications.[3] Yet in all Basil's troubles with Eustathius of Sebaste and with Valens he had the advantage of the co-operation of his much enduring friend.

[1] *Ep.* lviii. [2] Basil, *Ep.* lxxi.
[3] *Ep.* lix. This is a beautifully calm and soothing letter.

XII

Continued

GREGORY AT NAZIANZUS AND SELEUCIA

"Ὀν θυμὸν κατέδων, πατὸν ἀνθρώπων ἀλεείνων."—Homer.

SECTION V

The troubles caused by Basil and his consecration to the see of Sasima were not the only ones which afflicted the life of Gregory.

His brother Caesarius had gone back to his family when Julian set out for his Persian war, but returning to the court after Julian's death, had been honoured by Jovian and Valens, and had received from the latter an appointment as Imperial Treasurer in Bithynia. Nicaea, the town in which he lived, was devastated in 368 by a frightful earthquake, from which Caesarius had barely escaped with life after the loss of a great part of his possessions. Recognising the hand of God in his deliverance, he had thrown up all worldly plans, and had come to live at Nazianzus. Here he had been baptized, and after a short illness had died in 369, leaving, as his short will, the words—"worthy to be written in letters of gold"—"I wish all my

possessions to be given to the poor."[1] His death was a deep grief to Gregory, who loved him dearly, and he was further troubled with duties as his executor. It is a singular sign of the disorder of the times that powerful persons, enemies of Caesarius, seized all that they could of his property.[2] Gregory, who was left to fight his battle alone, had to write to Sophronius, Praefect of Constantinople, and to appeal for his protection.[3]

Caesarius was buried near the graves of the martyrs, and Nonna followed his bier not in mourning apparel, but in white and festive robes, as one who knew that, to a Christian, death is not a curse but a coronation. Gregory's "Seventh Oration" is a noble funeral sermon on the merits of his brother, to whose memory he also dedicated sixteen epitaphs.[4]

The next to die of this remarkable family was his sister Gorgonia, whose funeral sermon is the "Eighth Oration." She combined the virtues of an active wife and mother with those of a devoted Christian. Married to a citizen of Iconium, she bore him five children, and is as beautiful an example of matronhood as Macrina, sister of Basil, was of virginity. Her highest object was to train for God her children and her grandchildren. She did not bedeck herself—so her brother testifies—with gold, or fine apparel, or precious stones; she disdained the use of paints or cosmetics, nor did she purchase blond hair or decorate her head with rolls

[1] Basil, *Ep.* xxxii. 1: τὰ ἐμὰ πάντα βούλομαι γίνεσθαι τῶν πτωχῶν.

[2] *Carm. de rebus suis*, 217-234.

[3] *Ep.* xxix.; Tillemont, ix. 377; fg. on Caesarius generally, see *Orat.* vii.; *Epp.* xiv. xx.; *Carm. de Vit.* 368-385.

[4] The four dialogues on philosophic and theological subjects attributed to Caesarius are spurious. Tillemont, ix. 701; Oudin, *De Script. Eccl.* i. 543; Cave, *Hist. Lit.* i. 249; Fabricius, *Bibl. Graec.* viii. 435.

of artificial curls, but lived in modesty, self-denial, prayer, and good works. Shortly before her death she too was baptized. She had received in a dream a warning of the time at which she should die, and assembling all her relatives about her bed, took leave of them and departed in peace. Even when she seemed to have ceased to breathe her lips moved, and listening intently they heard the words of the psalm which were also precious to Luther in his closing days, "I will lay me down in peace, and sleep."[1]

The sense of bereavement did not keep Gregory from his pastoral duties. At one time we find him active in consecrating Eulalius as a bishop for the citizens of Doaris, who wished for his ministrations to save them from the intrusion of heresy.[2] In another address, preached apparently at the opening of the hospital for the sick and lepers which Basil had founded near Caesarea, he urges upon Christians the duty of caring for the poor.[3] In another (373) he does his utmost to console and warn his own people under the terrible trial of a cattle disease and a devastating hail storm.[4] In yet another he made a grand use of the pulpit as a tribune of the people. The inhabitants of Nazianzus, exasperated by some imperial exaction, had revolted in the year 373, and the governor of the province had effaced the town from the position of a city and threatened to destroy it. The citizens appealed to their bishop for protection, and he in a noble sermon pleaded with the governor for mercy, while he addressed to the trembling multitude the words of consolation and hope.[5] The bishops of that day never appeared in a purer light than when they thus used their spiritual privileges to interpose between the wrath of rulers and their unhappy subjects.

[1] Ps. iv. 9. [2] *Orat.* xiii. [3] *Orat.* xiv. [4] *Orat.* xvi. [5] *Orat.* xvii

The next year the elder Gregory closed his forty-five years of blameless labour in his little bishopric. He was nearly a hundred years old, and he died, as became a faithful pastor, upon his knees in prayer. His son, in the presence of Basil, pronounced his funeral oration[1] in the magnificent octagonal church—lighted like a Grecian temple from the summit and surmounted with life-size statues—which the old bishop had built.

Not long after died his mother Nonna, and Gregory was left alone in life. Old as she was, her eye was not dim, nor her natural force abated. She went to the church of her husband and her son, and while kneeling at the holy table which they served, suddenly heard, without any previous illness, the call of death. She had just time to grasp the table with one hand and to raise the other to heaven with the prayer, "Lord Christ, be merciful!" when she sank down in peaceful death. Her son, who had spoken much of her in the funeral sermon of his father, did not preach on the occasion, but dedicated a series of little poems to her memory.[2]

Gregory was not formally elected to the vacant bishopric, indeed he expressly declined to be so. For a time, indeed, the sense of duty compelled him to continue the work of his father; but in 375 he was seized by an illness so severe that it brought him to the gates of the grave, and more than once his friend Eusebius, Bishop of Samosata, came to his bedside as though to visit a dying man.[3] On his recovery (375) he withdrew to the Isaurian Seleucia, of which he liked to think as the home of St. Thekla, where he lived in seclusion for three years, and there, while still suffering from illness,[4] he heard the sad news that his friend

[1] *Orat.* xviii. [2] *Carm.* 66-100 (*Opp.* ii. 1133-1149).
[3] *Epp.* lxiv. lxv. [4] *Ep.* lxxvi.

Basil was no more (379). The news was all the more sad because of the breach in their friendship; but two years later he delivered at Caesarea one of his finest orations in honour of Basil, which shows that Christian magnanimity had triumphed, and that the deep error of judgment which Basil had committed against him was completely forgiven.

Gregory was naturally of a depressed and desponding disposition, and life never looked darker to him than at this moment. To his friend the rhetorician Eudoxius he writes one of the saddest letters ever penned.

"You ask," he writes, "about my condition. It is full of bitterness. I have lost Basil, I have lost Caesarius, my spiritual brother and my natural brother. I may say with David, 'My father and my mother have forsaken me.'[1] My state of health is feeble; old age is over my head; there are complications of cares, irruptions of business; my friends are faithless; the Church is without pastors. All that is honourable is perishing; evils are naked; our voyage is in the night; there is a beacon nowhere. Christ is sleeping. What will happen to us? I look for no deliverance from calamity but death; and if I judge by things here, I am terrified by the things beyond the grave."[2]

Perhaps to the same period of sickness and sorrow belongs one of the most exquisite of his poems—that on human nature.[3] "Yesterday," he sings, "worn with my griefs, I was sitting in a shady grove, apart from every one, devouring my heart. Indeed, I love as a remedy in my distresses, to converse in sorrow with my own soul. The breezes were whispering with the singing

[1] Ps. xxvii. 10.

[2] *Ep.* lxxx. It is difficult to represent in English the energetic despair of this little note.

[3] *Carm.* xiv. (*Opp.* ii. 469).

birds, shedding from the topmost branches a sweet seduction on my heart, stricken as it was; and from the trees the sweet-singing, shrill cicalas, friends of the sun, made the whole grove resound with their chirping. The cool water, as it flowed softly through the dewy grove, babbled close beside my feet; but I was wholly possessed by violent grief. I cared not for all this beauty, for the mind, when it is crowded with griefs, cares not to yield to delight, and I, in the whirlings of my agitated soul, fell into this contest of conflicting words. What was I? Who am I? What shall I be? I know not clearly, nor does he know who is far wiser than I. But I, enveloped in mist, wander hither and thither, having nothing which I desire, not even in a dream." After questioning his soul further in this strain, he stops himself short and cries, "Whither wilt thou take me, oh ill-devising care? Stay! All things are inferior to God. Yield to reason. Not in vain did God create me. I recant my song; it is the fruit of my littleness. Now there is darkness, but then there will be truth, and thou shalt understand all things, either gazing on God or being devoured by fire. When my soul thus sang to me, it soothed my grief, and I went homewards from the shady grove, sometimes laughing at my foolish thoughts, and sometimes also smouldering my heart with grief, while my thoughts were still in conflict."

Doubtless he supposed that nothing more awaited him in this life except ascetic solitude, sad memories, and the sessions of silent thought. But God had other things in store for him, and the most active and important work of his life was yet to come, though it was destined to be crowded into three memorable years.

XII

Continued

GREGORY AT CONSTANTINOPLE

"Ποιμνὴν ἄνυδρον τοῖς λόγοις ἐπήγασα."—*Carm.* xii. 116.
"Γρηγορίου δὲ τοῦτό φασιν ὥσπερ ἴδιον, τὴν Θεολογίαν."—PHOTIUS.

SECTION VI

THE orthodox Church of Constantinople was hard bestead, and yet the condition of the city was such that never had it greater need for the lessons of morality and the power of the Gospel. It had early begun to be infected with the worst vices of crowded cities. At the head of the social disorder stood a deeply-corrupted court, which was the centre of attraction for an effeminate, luxurious, and frivolous aristocracy. The people lived for "bread and games." Keen-witted, turbulent, and idle, they cared for nothing but races, theatres, and fights of wild beasts. The taint of vicious levity showed itself in every sphere of life. Even religion was made subservient to the needs of incessant comedy. The affairs of the Church were travestied and ridiculed on the boards of the theatre. Nothing raised a louder laugh than when prominent Christians were made the subject of a screaming farce. In reproving this incurable

lack of seriousness, which was the death of spiritual progress, Gregory says that it would not surprise him if the sermon which he was then preaching were made a subject for comic jesting. "The first of cities," he complained, "is in danger of becoming a city of players."[1]

A yet worse development of the evil was that in deference to the prevailing passion for the stage the services of the Church and the sermons of the preacher had a tendency to become more and more histrionic. Men became presbyters not in order to preach simple Christ to simple men, but that they might share in the intoxicating applause which was bestowed on the actor and the charioteer.

Worse than all, the deepest mysteries of religion, instead of being treated as the source of an awful devotion, were turned into an excuse for the petty janglings of the ignorant and the sectarian fury of the opinionated. In the shops, in the streets, in the baths, men discussed such arcana of theology as the Eternal Prae-existence of the Son, and the communication of idioms between the two Natures in the one Person. "If you ask change for a shilling, you are told," says Gregory of Nyssa, "that 'the Father differs from the Son, because He is not begotten.' If you ask for a loaf, you are informed that 'the Father is greater than the Son.' If you wish to know whether your bath is hot enough, you must be content with the assurance that 'the Son has been educed out of nothing.'"[2] Every vulgar place of meeting—the markets, the theatres, the banquets, even the scenes of debauchery, resounded with the chatter of "impromptu dogmatists."[3]

[1] *Oratt.* ii. 84, xxi. 5, xxii. 8.
[2] Greg. Nyss. *Orat. de deit. fil. et Spir. Sanct.*
[3] Id. *αὐτοσχέδιοι δογμάτισται.*

As a natural consequence of this, the Christianity of Constantinople was rife with schisms and heresies, which rent asunder the unity of cities and families. The orthodox Bishop Paul had been martyred in 351. The predominant theology since the reigns of Constantius and Valens had become ARIAN. The EUNOMIANS, who had learnt from Eunomius, their founder, the practice of discussing every question in dialectic forms, were a numerous body. They were *Anomoeans, i.e.* they held the nature of the Son to be *unlike* that of the Father. The MACEDONIANS were virtuous in their lives and ascetic in their practices,[1] but only accepted the *Homoiousion* doctrine, and they also failed to grasp the Catholic doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit. The NOVATIAN schismatics, orthodox in doctrine, were the very Pharisees of Christianity, and regarded the practices of the Church as lax and unfaithful. Lastly, the APOLLINARIANS, in their deadly hostility to the Arians, had swung to the opposite extreme of the pendulum, and instead of denying the Divinity of Christ, obscured the perfectness of His Humanity. Among these animosities and "spider-webs"[2] of conflicting religionism the members of the orthodox Church formed but a depressed and insignificant minority, and strifes and divisions raged even among them. It was an additional misery that no small influence was exercised over the Church by the Emperor, who might be a Pagan, like Julian; a Semi-Arian like Constantius, or an Arian like Valens; or who, like Arcadius, might be so imbecile that the fortunes of the faith depended on the intrigues of a woman or the caprices of a eunuch.

Such was the deplorable state of things in the

[1] They are named from Macedonius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who was deposed for cruelty and misconduct. [2] *Carm.* xi. 562-651.

capital of the East, when in the year 378 Valens perished—burnt to death with his retinue in a house to which the Goths had set fire after their bloody victory at Adrianople. Like Julian and the three sons of Constantine, Valens died childless. Gratian, profoundly impressed with the perils of the Empire, felt the need of a powerful defender, and in 379 called Theodosius from the retirement of his Spanish farm to share with him the awful burdens of the diadem. The faith of Theodosius was orthodox. The Catholics, inspired with a gleam of fresh hope, by the advice of certain bishops, among whom must be reckoned Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria, turned their eyes to Gregory as the one man who could rebuild upon the ruins of their distracted Church.[1] How the affair was managed we have no record; but Gregory was brought, perhaps by a *ruse*, perhaps even with a little show of violence, to Constantinople, and consented to take under his charge the little congregation of the orthodox.[2]

He reached Constantinople about Easter 379, and we learn the aims which filled his mind from one of his poems.[3] He lived at first in the house of a kinsman,[4] and one of the rooms was large enough to accommodate the shrunken congregation.[5] Gregory admits, but is not ashamed of, the paucity of his flock. The stars, he says, are more precious than sand-grains, and pearls than pebbles. But Gregory began from the first to win so many adherents to the Nicene faith that the room

[1] Perhaps Basil before his death had given similar advice. *Carm. de Vit.* 592, 858; *Carm. adv. Episc.* 81; Greg. Presb. *Vit. Greg. Naz.* p. 18

[2] *Orat.* xxxiii. 13: *Carm. de Vit.* 607, οὕτω μὲν ἦλθον οὐχ ἑκών, ἀλλ' ἀνδράσι Κλαπεὶς βιάιοις.

[3] *Carm.* iii.

[4] Baronius (*ad Ann.* 378) conjectures that this was Nicobulus, who had married Gregory's niece Alypiana, daughter of Gorgonia.

[5] *Orat.* xxv. 19; Socrates, *H. E.* iv. 1.

rapidly grew into a chapel, and the chapel into a stately church, which, in reference to the hopes of an awakenment from the general torpor, received the significant name of Anastasia, the Church of the Resurrection.[1]

But Gregory won his way solely by the force of his character and the eloquence of his preaching. In all external respects he disappointed the expectations of men who were accustomed to judge by appearances. They had heard his fame, and expected to see a stately and imposing orator. Instead of this they saw a man who was short, meagre, sickly, prematurely aged. He was very pale, with a low nose, straight eyebrows, and dense but short beard. He was but fifty years old, but the fringe of his hair, which surrounded his bald head, was already white, and even the upper parts of his beard were "sable-silvered."[2] His careworn countenance, which had been so often stained with tears, wore an aspect of habitual melancholy; he had lost his right eye, and a scar was visible on his face. His shoulders were stooping, his look downcast, and his poor dress more like that of a mendicant than the bishop of the capital, which he describes as one "on which the sea and the land were emulous to heap their blessings, and to crown her as the queen of cities."[3] And yet, in spite of these disadvantages, Gregory accomplished all, and more than all, that had been expected of him, and probably more than

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1083: Ἀναστασία, ναῶν ὁ τιμιώτατος,
ἣ πίστιν ἐξήγειρεν ἐν γῇ κειμένην.
Sozomen's story (*H. E.* vii. 5) about a woman falling from the gallery and raised to life illustrates mythology in its aspect of a disease of language.

[2] This is what Simeon Metaphrastes means by saying that "the points of his beard were, so to speak, dimmed with smoke." He wrote, it is true, nearly eight centuries after the death of Gregory, but his description is probably derived from ancient sources, and agrees with a picture of Gregory in an old manuscript of his works at Paris. Ullmann also refers to Ducange, *Constantinop. Christiana.* iv. 6.

[3] *Carm. de Vit.* 696, fg. *Carm. adv. Episc.* 110.

could have been accomplished by any of his contemporaries.

His first object was to amend the evils which were prevalent in the Church itself. He tried to build up his people in the practices of piety and obedience to the laws of God. He taught them from the first that a pure theology was valueless without a holy life, and that they which know of Christ's doctrine must do His will.[1] Proceeding to doctrinal matters, he condemned in the Eunomians the vain logomachy and antitheses of a falsely-named science, and the pernicious spirit of heresy-hunting which prevailed in all sects alike. He disapproved of heated partisanship, and the habit of making theological mysteries the subjects of indiscriminate chatter. He deprecated the unscrupulous condemnation of those who differ from ourselves, who yet may find room in the Father's many mansions. He argued against the errors of the heresies and sects, but he argued with honourable fairness, without sneering, or misrepresentation, or anathema; and his personal bearing was marked by dignity and gentleness to all.

And yet he had to face a storm of odium, and he did so with a firmness which justly earned him the name of "a confessor." He was too self-denying for the worldly, too independent for the courtiers, too moderate for the bigoted. He was incessantly pelted with trifling cavils on the obscurity of his birthplace, the bluntness of his speech, his lack of charm, and love of tranquillity. He had "as many stones flung at him as other men have roses," but "the stones were his delight, and his only criticism was that they were so ill-aimed."[2]

[1] *Oratt.* xx. xxii.

[2] *Carm.* xi. 665: λίθους παρήσω, τὴν ἐμὴν πανδαισίαν
ὧν ἔν τι μεμφοιμ'· οὐ γὰρ ἦσαν εὔστοχοι.

His life was often in danger. On one occasion a furious swarm of Arians, headed by "common beggars, who had forfeited their claim to pity, monks, who looked like goats or satyrs, and women more frightful than Jezebels," armed with sticks, firebrands, and stones, burst into his Church of the Resurrection, wrecked the furniture, assaulted the congregation, mingled with blood the wine of the chalice, and filled the house of prayer with scenes of wanton outrage.[1] Gregory happily escaped with his life, and yet, since one man had been killed, he was brought up the next day before the magistrates on the charge of having caused the tumult! On this occasion his enemies found that they had gone too far, and Gregory's triumphant vindication of his innocence served only to establish his position on a firmer basis.

All these wrongs he endured with patience, but he was even more troubled by the spirit of faction which raged at times even in his own community. In his "Twenty-second Oration" he complains bitterly of the prevalence of hypocrisy, the difficulty of finding any one whom he could really trust. The wretched Meletian schism at Antioch—in which the East in general took the part of Meletius, and the West of Paulinus—shed its baleful influence even at Constantinople. It was the custom of the preacher to begin his sermon with the words "Peace to all," to which the people replied "And to thy spirit."[2] Gregory seized this occasion for a noble sermon on the spirit of peace, to which he urges all Christians, "although the man who refuses to take sides or join parties is ill-treated by both parties alike, and is either attacked or despised." "God," he says, "specially rejoices to reveal

[1] *Oratt.* xxiii. 5, xxxv. 3; *Ep.* 77; *Carm. de Vit.* 660-670.

[2] Chrys. *Hom. iii. in Ephes.* εἰρήνη πᾶσιν.

Himself as Love. We who worship Him who is Love, why do we hate one another? We who preach peace, why do we wage war? . . . Our discords are the triumphs of the enemy, our tragedies are their comedies."[1]

Such sermons were not in vain. We cannot judge of his orations by the extant specimens. They are more orations than homilies. In one of them alone[2] does he adopt the expository line which gives such permanent value to the pulpit addresses of Chrysostom and Luther. They are neither Biblical nor altogether popular, but they abound in quotations from Scripture, and are full of practical exhortation. It was in Constantinople that he preached the Orations on the Trinity, which specially won for him the title of "The Theologian," first given to him in a sermon printed among the works of Chrysostom.[3] His sermons, as a rule, are on subjects, not on texts, and are not in accordance with the taste of modern times. Their elaborate rhetoric, their stately pomp of words, their vague extravagances of eulogy, their conceits and antitheses—in one expressive word their euphuism—do not indeed destroy the value of their sincerity and thoughtfulness, but they betray the pupil of the sophists. Of these, some of the most celebrated—as, for instance, Pausanias and Eunomius—were, like himself, Cappadocians.[4] But we must remember that the taste of Gregory was the taste of his day. His style

[1] Two of his orations are εἰρηνικοί, xxii. xxiii.

[2] *Orat.* xxxvii. *on Matt. xix.* 1.

[3] The name ὁ Θεολόγος does not, in this sense, exactly correspond to our title "The Theologian." It has special reference to one who rightly understands the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. See Suicer, s. v. *θεολογεῖν*.

[4] Whether the Cappadocian brogue was observable in Gregory's utterance, as it was in that of the rhetor Pausanias, we do not know.—Philost. *De Vit. Sophist.* ii. 13.

was the perfection of a style which all admired, and at which all orators—Pagan as well as Christian—aimed. It won him many listeners. Some valued his eloquence and his reasoning, some his orthodoxy, and others were pleased because they had summoned him from his retreat, and regarded his work as theirs.[1] Among the Eastern orators of his day he occupied the first rank, and his sermons dealt a severe blow on the dominant Arianism, in spite of the calmness and moderation with which they were expressed. Further, they acquire a deeper value from his lofty estimate of practical sincerity. "Wouldst thou become a theologian?" he asks. "Keep the commandments. Conduct is the step to contemplation."[2]

He has himself drawn for us, under the disguise of a dream, the aspect presented by an evening congregation in the brilliantly-lighted Church of Anastasia.[3] He describes himself seated on the bishop's throne, but seated there in all humility; the elders and chief members of the congregation ranged a little below him; the deacons and other Church helpers looking like angels in their white robes; the people, like a swarm of bees, struggling with each other to get the places nearest to the chancel, and even clinging to its holy gates; others thronging to hear him from the streets and markets; the holy virgins and noble women listening with deep attention in their seats in the gallery; the eyes of all fixed upon him in expectation that he would preach now a simple and practical, now a profound and theological sermon: and how with powerful voice and fiery soul he kept preaching to them nothing but the doctrine of the Trinity, while some stormed, and some fretted, and some openly opposed, and some were sunk in deep meditation, and

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1126. [2] *Orat.* xx. 12, πρᾶξις ἐπίβασις θεωρίας. [3] *Carm.* xvi.

the whole congregation resembled a tumultuous sea, until his words began to work upon them, and "he called across the tumult, and the tumult fell."[1]

In other passages of his writings we read of the persons who openly and secretly took down his sermons in shorthand to write them out for their own use afterwards,[2] and of the detestable custom of loud expressions of applause or disapproval which then prevailed in Church services, and of which we read in the lives of many of the Fathers.[3] The applause, as Gregory implies, was as often as not the reward of popular ignorance to clerical assumption.

And thus Gregory made his way until the fortunes of the Church were restored. By pureness, by kindness, by consistent piety, he won men's hearts in spite of opposition and contempt. He left, he says, to the pride and wealth of other presbyters and bishops their delicate viands, their magnificent robes, their brilliant equipages, their haughty bearing. He would not contend, as they did, with the display and luxury of generals and statesmen; he would not deconsecrate the altar by fulness of bread or squander on his own luxuries the goods which belonged to the poor, or drive through the streets drawn by fine horses and surrounded by crowds of flatterers. If they wanted a prelate of that kind at Constantinople, let them choose some one else, and leave to him his solitude, his provincialism, and *his God!*

When Evagrius of Pontus joined him, and became his archdeacon, he might well feel that the labours of his life had not been in vain.[4] But still more must he

[1] *Carm.* xvi. 33 : πάντας δ' εὐεπίῃ κατεκήλεεν.

[2] *Orat.* xlii. 26, χαίρετε γραφίδες : Bingham, xiv. 4, sec. 29

[3] See the anecdote of Gregory's answer to Jerome, *infra*, and Jer. *Ep.* lii. *Omni populo acclamante.*

[4] Evagrius had been ordained reader by Basil.

have felt that he had indeed arrived at the zenith of his fame when a person already so widely celebrated as the learned, eloquent, and impassioned Jerome, who was but a few years younger than himself, came to sit at his feet, and expressed towards him so warm an affection, so deep a reverence.[1]

All of Gregory's experiences with strangers were by no means so pleasant, and there was one incident which filled him with vexation. Although he was naturally endowed with some insight into character, his long years of solitude and of life in a remote country town had given him but little experience of the ways of the world. There came to Constantinople, from Alexandria, a man of unknown antecedents, named Hero or Maximus, who belonged to the worst class of clerical adventurers.[2] He was a bad mixture of the thorough worldling, the sham Christian, and the sham philosopher. He pretended to be a strict ascetic, and carried the staff and wore the cloak of a Cynic, while at the same time he dyed his sleek, black hair gold-colour, like the most consummate dandy, and wore it hanging over his shoulders in loose artistic locks. This modish philosopher and theologic partisan professed to be a relative of martyrs, and having been brought by hunger or by ambition to Constantinople, succeeded in thoroughly deceiving the simplicity of Gregory by flattery and the profession of strict orthodoxy. He showed the marks of blows which he professed to have received as a martyr in defence of the faith, but which had probably been inflicted in punishment for former crimes. Gregory

[1] See in the Life of Jerome, *infra*; and *Epp.* l. lii.; *De Virr. illustr.* 117; *c. Ruf.* 1; *ad Eph. lib.* iii. "Eo magistro glorior et exulto."

[2] On this person, see *Orat.* xxv. *Carm. de Vit.* 754 fg. ξανθός, μελάνθριξ, κ.τ.λ. Jer. *De Vir. ill.* 117.

at once placed implicit confidence in this subtle impostor; asked him to his table, consulted him on all matters of importance, and actually went so far as to pronounce on "the philosopher Hero" a glowing eulogy in the presence of the whole Church. Strengthened by such unwonted success, Maximus aimed at nothing less than ousting Gregory out of his bishopric, and taking his place! To this end he plotted with the Egyptians, and was even supported by Peter of Alexandria. We can hardly believe the charge that Peter had been bribed by Maximus, but perhaps he had taken offence because in the Meletian schism Gregory supported Meletius and not Paulinus, and not improbably he wanted to strike a blow for the establishment of the primacy of his see over that of Constantinople. At any rate, Peter sent to the assistance of Maximus in his treacherous designs seven Egyptians, with barbarous names derived from those of Egyptian gods, whom Gregory calls "contemptible seamen." At this juncture there arrived a presbyter of Thasos, with a large sum of money for the purchase of Proconnesian marble to decorate a church, and Maximus, by holding out dazzling hopes to this delegate, managed to get possession of the money. The plot ripened, and one night when Gregory lay ill, the impostor, with his motley following of Egyptians, presbyters, and sailors, managed to enter the church and get himself consecrated bishop, while no one at Constantinople had any suspicion of what was going on. But before the ceremony was half over some of the neighbouring clergy were informed of it; the rumour spread; the church became thronged with Catholics and others, and the Egyptians were driven out. Unabashed, however, they took refuge in the miserable shop of a flute player, and there cut off the gold-dyed locks of Maximus, and com-

pleted the consecration! The new bishop (!) was compelled to beat an ignominious retreat, but went with brazen front to Theodosius at Thessalonica to make good the validity of his claim to be the first Prelate of the Eastern world.[1] Theodosius gave him a rough reception, but he actually seems to have persuaded Ambrose of Milan and Damasus of Rome that he, and not Gregory, was the genuine Patriarch![2] He then went with his usual insolence to confront the Bishop of Alexandria, where, happily, the governor speedily dealt with his preposterous pretensions.[3] He afterwards wrote a book against the Arians. If Gregory had been a man who cherished ill-feeling against those who had wronged him, he might have found it hard to banish all feelings of resentment against Peter and the Egyptians, who had behaved towards him with such flagrant injustice. He took, however, the earliest opportunity to be reconciled to them, and did all in his power to secure a genuine and lasting peace.[4]

[1] He attributed the interruption of his consecration to *Arian* violence!

[2] The actual *title* Patriarch was not formally given to the Bishop of Constantinople till later.

[3] See Pagi *in Baronium Ann.* 379.

[4] *Orat.* xxxiv.

XII

Continued

GREGORY PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

"οὐ γὰρ ἐμῆς πολίης παίζειν, καὶ λάτριν ἀεικῶς
ἔμμεναι ἀντὶ θρόνων ὃν περὶ μαρνάμενοι
σχίζονται, καὶ κόσμον ὅλον τέμνουσιν, ἀθέσμως,
Αἳ αἳ τῶν μεγάλων ἡμετέρων ἀχέων."—*Carm.* xvii. 97-100.

SECTION VII

Not long after the humiliating trouble caused by the impostor Maximus, Gregory, who by this time was utterly weary and disgusted, in one of his sermons dropped a hint of his desire to leave Constantinople. It was received with an outburst of wailing, and one of his hearers went so far as to call out in the church, "If you banish yourself, you will banish the doctrine of the Trinity from Constantinople."[1] Gregory was so much moved by the earnest longing and strong resolve of his people to keep him among them, that he promised to stay at any rate until the approaching council of bishops came to some decision about the see of Constantinople. He declined to confirm his promise by an oath, only

[1] *Carm. de Vit.* 1100 : συνεκβαλεῖς γάρ, εἶπε, σαυτῷ Τριάδα.

because, at his baptism, he had vowed that he would never take an oath.

But he had been so much tried by recent events that he needed to bathe his troubled soul in solitude and the peaceful loveliness of nature. Gregory shared with Basil that romantic or sentimental view of nature which is usually regarded as characteristically modern. It is true that he could only find real peace in faith and prayer, but faith and prayer were called into purer life amid the beauties of the unintelligent creation. Preaching on the Sunday after Easter, he depicts with keen delight the dawn of spring. "The queen of the seasons," he says, "holds a festal procession for the queen of days,"[1] and he proceeds to speak of the brightening heaven, the more resplendent sunlight, the friendlier light of the moon, the purer choir of stars, the fuller flow of the streams, the swelling of the buds, the greener grass of the meadows, and the bounding of the young lambs. He describes the ships unfurling their sails to the winds amid the songs of the sailors, while the dolphins gambol around their course; the yoking of oxen to the plough, the songs of the shepherds as they lie in the shadows of trees, the patient fishermen upon the rock, the bee plundering the blossoms, the birds building their nests, the glory of the world praising God with voices that cannot be uttered.[2] In another passage he tells his hearers about the thoughts which filled his heart as he took his lonely walk at evening beside the sea, and watched the storm which rose over its waters; and so he gradually turned these

[1] *Orat.* xliv. 10.

[2] Humboldt might have quoted this passage to illustrate the "modern" romanticism, which appears so markedly in the Cappadocian Fathers.

thoughts to Christ as the one Rock which no storm can shake in the wild and stormy sea of life.[1] Alluding to the bishopric at the close of his address, he said that no man of sense much desired it, and he could wish that there were no primacy but that of virtue.

His brief visit to country scenes sent him back to his work with renewed vigour, and now only one circumstance was required to secure the victory for the orthodox Church, of which he had been the mainstay since he obeyed the call to act as bishop in the capital of the East.

The final triumph was secured by the influence of Theodosius. He was an upholder of the Nicene faith, and was baptized in Thessalonica by the orthodox Bishop Acholios. From Thessalonica he addressed to the capital the famous edict, which declared that henceforth the Nicene faith should be the faith of the Empire. On Dec. 24, 380, he arrived in person at Constantinople, and offered to the Arian bishop, Demophilus, the choice between adopting the Catholic dogma or resigning his bishopric. The Arians had been for forty years in secure possession of the chief churches and the ecclesiastical wealth of Constantinople, and were a numerous and powerful body. But Demophilus saw that it would be useless to resist the civil power. He assembled his followers in the church for the last time, and said to them: "Brethren! it is written in the Gospel, 'When they persecute you in one city, flee to another.' Since then the Emperor excludes us from the churches, know that to-morrow we will assemble ourselves outside the city."[2] Theodosius did not propose

[1] *Orat.* xxvi. 9.

[2] Socr. *H. E.* v. 7. Socrates says that the text means, "You must leave the city of the world and go to the Heavenly Jerusalem." So easy is it to twist Scripture by "allegory" into saying the opposite to what it means!

to subject them to any further persecution. The more fiery Catholics were discontented with his tolerance, but Gregory cordially approved of it. They might charge him with indifferentism if they liked. He had learned the lesson that violence is hateful to God, and that the only true way to deal with heretics is *πάντας ἕλκειν ἡμέρως*, to persuade not to coerce.[1]

Theodosius received Gregory with the utmost distinction, and closed their long interview with the words: "This temple God hands over to you as the reward of your labours."[2] The temple was the Church of the Apostles,[3] that earliest mausoleum of Christian sovereigns, the first specimen of churches like St. Denys, the Escorial, and Westminster Abbey. The day fixed for taking possession of the episcopal throne was one of dangerous excitement. The Emperor himself walked in procession, with Gregory by his side; and they were escorted through the dense crowds of spectators by the imperial troops. The sacred building had to be occupied and protected by soldiers; and as the procession passed along the streets it was saluted by screams, and threats, and the wailing of women and children, as though the whole city had been taken by storm. It was (Nov. 26) a dark and gloomy morning, chilly with a Black Sea wind, and Gregory himself was pale, dispirited, and out of health, as, with his glance turned upward to heaven, he walked between the army and the Emperor.[4] The Arians exulted in the evil omen, but no sooner

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1287-1304. The whole passage is admirable, but I will only quote two lines—

οὐ γὰρ κατείργειν ἀλλὰ πείθειν ἔννομον
εἶναι νομίζω, καὶ πρὸς ἡμῶν τι πλέον.

[2] Id. 1311.

[3] Not, as Tillemont supposes, the Church of St. Sophia.

[4] *μέσος στρατηγοῦ καὶ στράτου, βλέπων ἄνω.*

had the Emperor and the bishops passed into the sanctuary, and uplifted their hands to God in prayer than a burst of glorious sunlight streamed through the clouds, flashed on the arms of the soldiers and the rich vestments of the priests, and filled the church with glory. The exulting Catholics, and with them even the illustrious persons and noble women, joined in one loud cry that Gregory should be appointed Patriarch of Constantinople.[1] The Emperor seconded the petition of the multitude, but Gregory, too much overcome with emotion to address the congregation, bade one of his clergy to entreat them to cease their shouting, to leave the question of the bishopric for a future occasion, and to join in prayer and thanksgiving. If he were to be bishop, he would only accept the charge by the choice of the bishops assembled in council, and in the most regular and canonical manner. He gained in general respect by this decision; only a single sword was drawn, and almost as instantly sheathed, on a day which had threatened to end in tumult and massacre.[2] Meanwhile he was put in possession of the rich treasures and revenues of the Church, and he managed them with a wisdom and self-denial which still further enhanced his reputation. To the Arians he behaved personally with conspicuous gentleness, though in one of his orations he did not spare bitter words.[3] Some of their zealots determined upon his assassination. One day a youth, pale, with long hair, in black garments, came into his chamber, accompanied by some of the common people. Gregory was lying ill in bed, but he addressed to them a few friendly words. The men retired, but the wild-looking youth approached him. Gregory was about to spring from

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1336-1370. [2] Id. 1394. [3] *Orat.* xxxv. 2.

his bed, when the youth flung himself at his feet, speechless, and as though beside himself. To Gregory's agitated questions as to who he was? whence he came? what was his purpose? he only replied by wringing his hands, with loud cries, until Gregory himself shed tears in pity for his agitation. The attendants came in and seized the youth, and told Gregory that this wild demeanour was but the effect of sudden remorse. The youth had been missioned to murder him. Startling as was the incident, Gregory at once forgave him. "God save thee," he said. "God has saved me, and I will be gentle to thee. Thy crime has made thee mine. See that henceforth thou walkest worthily of me, and of God to whom thou belongest."[1] This incident, illustrating still more clearly the kind and placable character of the great theologian, won the hearts of many of his opponents.

It became so evident that he might on any day be forced into the bishopric, that he preached a sermon on the subject before the Emperor and his court.[1] He recognised the favour shown towards him, and spoke modestly of the services he had rendered. He had no desire to be bishop; he had even expressed a wish that there were none of these lordly and pompous offices, and that men were recognised only by their real merits. He had never cared to hang about the doors of the great. He had lived a retired and philosophic life, and cared nothing for the vain-glory of the world. If he had left his episcopal work at Nazianzus to come to Constantinople, it had only been from a desire to support a declining faith. He then, with singular freedom of speech, addresses the various classes of his congregation; reminding the wise, and the rich, and

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1442-1475.

the princes,[1]—"under whose hands was the whole world ruled by a little diadem and a small rag of purple"[2]—of their responsibilities and duties. His conduct was as independent as his words. He tells us long afterwards that he had never cared to dine at the table of a mortal king, or to clasp blood-stained hands, or to pray for personal favours, or to take part in splendid gatherings. His delight was to live in peace, and study, and spiritual freedom, "and to gaze on the bright countenance of truth in the still and quiet air of delightful studies."

On Jan. 10, 381, Theodosius again passed a strong edict against the Arians and other heretics,[3] and still further, to secure spiritual unity, he summoned a great assembly of Eastern bishops. This Council of Constantinople is usually known as "the Synod of the 150 Bishops," of whom the most celebrated were Meletius of Antioch, Gregory of Nyssa, Diodore of Tarsus, and Cyril of Jerusalem. Damasus of Rome was neither invited nor consulted, and the gentle and saintly Meletius, whom Damasus did not recognise as Bishop of Antioch, was enthusiastically elected president of the council. One of the first acts of the assembled bishops was contemptuously to set aside the claims of Maximus, and to annul any episcopal act which he might pretend to perform.[4] Another was to ordain that bishops had no right to meddle or to ordain presbyters in any diocese except their own. The third was, in spite of

[1] *Orat.* xxxvi. 11.

[2] Id. κόσμος ὅλος . . . διαδήματι μικρῷ καὶ βραχεῖ ῥακίῳ κρατούμενος.

[3] "*Justissimis et misericordissimis* legibus adversus impios," says Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, v. 26). The heretics probably took a very different view of these laws.

[4] *Conc. Constant. can.* 4: "Concerning Maximus the Cynic, and his insolence and irregularity, the Synod has decreed that Maximus neither is, nor ever was, a bishop."

Gregory's groans and protests, to appoint him Bishop of Constantinople, in obedience to the wishes of the Emperor, the people, and the majority of the clergy.[1] He yielded, he says, in the chimerical hope that by his influence in so high a place of authority he might be able to put an end to the Meletian schism, and so, "like a choragus who leads two choirs," to reconcile the disagreement which had so long smouldered between the East and West.

No sooner were these preliminary steps taken than Meletius—"the honey-named and honey-natured"—died,[2] and with him all hopes of peace. The leading clergy of Antioch had indeed sworn that in case either Meletius or Paulinus died, they would recognise the survivor as their sole bishop. But now that Meletius was dead, they refused to abide by the compact. Gregory had been elected president of the council in place of Meletius, and used all his influence to secure the recognition of Paulinus. He had gone so far as to say that, in order to prove the absolute simplicity and sincerity of his motives, he was quite willing to lay aside his bishopric, and to lead a life more peaceful if less glorious. But it required a stronger will and a more decisive influence than his to check the unscrupulous bitterness of party spirit. The assembled bishops were Meletians, but they could not rise to the lofty wisdom and impartiality of

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1525—
οὗτοί μ' ἐνιδρύουσι τοῖς σεμνοῖς θρόνοις
βοῶντα καὶ στένοντα.

[2] Id. 1521—
τὸν ὄνθ' ὅπερ κέκλητο, καὶ καλούμενον
ὃ ἦν· Μέλιτος γὰρ καὶ τρόπος καὶ τοὔνομα.

The story told of how Theodosius prostrated himself before Meletius, because he had seen him in vision, is a repetition of the meeting of Jaddua and Alexander, and again recurs in the story of Edwin of Deira and Paulinus of York.

Gregory, and abetted the old adherents of Meletius at Antioch in their determination not to accept the jurisdiction of Paulinus. The council became a scene of disgraceful violence. Like all popular assemblies, the ecclesiastics plunged into personal questions with special interest. Any one who will read the accounts of their deliberations will see how purely fantastic, how wilfully defiant of the plain facts of history, is the notion that councils are infallible, or that their members are, in any intelligible sense, under infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. "Even those councils which were oecumenical," says Cardinal Newman, "have nothing to boast of in regard to the fathers, taken individually, which compose them. They appear as the antagonist hosts in a battle, not as the shepherds of their people." The bishops raged, and stormed, and shouted against each other. They got as many personal allies as they could; they bandied bitter accusations; they even leapt up from their seats in transports of mutual animosity. Gregory, as their president, was thoroughly ashamed of them. No sooner had he ended his wise and conciliatory speech than many of those present, especially the younger clergy, buzzed about him like wasps, and raised an uproar which he compares to the chattering of jackdaws. Their fury was kindled most of all by any reference to the wishes of the West; and at the sapient argument that Christianity, like the sun, must proceed from the west to the dawn, the Eastern bishops—as Gregory too irreverently says—"showed their tusks like wild boars."[1] As for Theodosius, he evinced his wisdom, or his disdain, by leaving them to themselves. The Syrian bishops, supported by the Meletians at Antioch, refused the claims of Paulinus, and demanded the election of

[1] *De Vit.* 1805.

another bishop. Their choice fell on the presbyter Flavian, who, it was declared, had been one of the first and loudest to swear to the compact of the Antiochene clergy to recognise the survivor of the two existing bishops. Flavian was consecrated, and the meaningless schism continued to drag out its weary course.

When Gregory found that the voice of calmness and reason was of no avail in these stormy meetings, he indignantly withdrew himself from the meetings altogether. He was in weak health, and regarded with despair the noisy meetings which were devoted to the interests of faction and ambition. He even retired from his episcopal residence, and nothing but the strong desire of his people delayed his resignation.

Things became far worse on the arrival of the Egyptian and "Macedonian" bishops.[1] They were not favourably disposed towards Gregory. He had publicly opposed the views of the Macedonians, and had been embroiled with the Egyptians in consequence of their dubious conduct in the affair of Maximus. They were still more hostile to the views of those who had ordained Gregory, because they considered themselves insulted that the council should have taken any action before their arrival. The fifteenth canon of the Nicene Council had ordained that, to discountenance the intrigues of ambitious schemers, no bishop should be translated from one see to another. Now Gregory, they argued, had been consecrated Bishop of Sasima—the shadow of that unhappy affair always hung over him—and therefore could not be Bishop of Constantinople without direct violation of the decree of an Œcumenical Council. It is true that another Œcumenical Council

[1] Bishops who accepted the heretical views of Macedonius respecting the Holy Spirit. See *Ep.* ccii., and Labbé, *Conc.* ii. 911 *ff.*

had, by their election of him, nullified the earlier decree; but the Egyptian bishops regarded this election as void, because it had been made before their arrival. Meletius and the assembled bishops had not overlooked the Nicene canon, but on the one hand it had notoriously become a dead letter,[1] and on the other Meletius explained to the council that it had never had any object except to discourage worldly ambition, of which Gregory was not suspected even by his opponents.[2] Moreover, it merely affected a matter of discipline, and such a rule could be set aside by a council as well as made by one.

Gregory was already more than half-determined to resign owing to ill-health and distaste for the position. He saw that the Eastern and Western bishops were preparing for conflict.[3] He at once went to the council and told them that "whatever might be their decision about him, he entreated them to raise their thoughts to higher things, and to be of one mind with each other in love. Were they content to become a mere proverb and byeword of strife and partisanship? As for himself, he was quite ready to be, if they desired it, a second Jonah. Although he was innocent of having caused the storm, yet let them fling him overboard to save the ship; some friendly fish of the deep would come to save him. Unwillingly had he mounted the bishop's throne, gladly would he descend from it. He was in ill health. He had but one more debt to pay to God, the due of death. He had but one anxiety, which was that some one should be chosen in his place who would rightly uphold the doctrine of the Trinity for which he had fought so long."

[1] *Carm.* xi. 1810—

νόμους στρέφοντες τοὺς πάλαι τεθνηκότας
ὧν πλεῖστον ἦμεν καὶ σαφῶς ἐλεύθεροι.

[2] Theodoret, *H. E.* v. 8; *Carm.* xi. 1810. [3] *Carm.* xi. 1804.

The assembled Fathers, with disgraceful alacrity, took Gregory at his word.[1] He had committed the one unpardonable offence of being incomparably superior to most of them in learning, in eloquence, in loftiness of aim, in his whole tone of mind. He was charitable, and they were fierce; he tolerant, and they bitter; he loved the truth, and they loved party. They were sincerely thankful to get rid of one who uttered his high advice from a standpoint of moral superiority, and who did not spare his reproaches of their party spirit. They accepted his resignation with a delight which led to the false rumour that they had deposed him against his will. On ending his speech he had left the assembly, and if he received their speedy message with any sadness it was not on his own account, but because he knew that it would grieve his people. He went at once to the Emperor and told him that he came not to beg for gold, nor for contributions to his Church, nor places for his relations, but only for leave to yield to envy and resign his office. Theodosius, with unfeigned regret, accepted the resignation, and Constantinople, in losing the honour of his religious rule, lost the influence of its greatest man, who had only held his bishopric for a few troubled and miserable weeks.

Before departing, he delivered his famous farewell oration, which he felt compelled to do by the sincere sorrow which his departure caused to many of the faithful. He dwelt with not unnatural pride and thankfulness on the proofs of God's blessing, which he had received in the growth of his little congregation into

[1] *Carm.* xii. 145: προὔπεμψαν ἔνθεν ἀσμένως. We may be quite sure that bishops like Amphilochius of Iconium, Gregory of Nyssa, Peter of Sebaste, Diodorus of Tarsus, and Cyril of Jerusalem, were no parties to these proceedings.

the chief body of Christians in Constantinople; he spoke with stern reprobation of the factions with which religion was mingled;[1] he declared that his purpose had ever been to approve himself, not as a rhetorician, but as a pastor; he ended with an impassioned peroration, in which he bade farewell to his beloved Church of Anastasia, to the great Church of the Apostles, to the city in which he had laboured, to the duties and trials of public life.

The motives of his resignation of so splendid a position were doubtless mingled. He had soon grown weary of the bishopric which had been conferred on him as the natural reward of his labours and of his success. No doubt he sincerely yearned for ease, and his was not the hardy, practical nature which can face without shrinking the necessity of a constant struggle against baser souls. Whatever we may think of his somewhat haughty fastidiousness and his open disdain for the wretched intrigues by which he was surrounded, he complained but little of the unworthy treatment which he had received from persons in every way his inferiors. He felt that by resigning the bishopric and the presidency of the bishops he would facilitate their operations and set them free from the constraint of an alien influence. Men who could not be compared to him for eminence or worth might yet be better fitted than he for the management of a synod of which he had seen, with undisguised contempt, and has described with scathing sarcasm, the baser and least Christian aspect. His resignation, then, was an act of noble self-sacrifice, and it furnished a brilliant contrast to the restless and eager ambition with which the episcopate was sought by time-servers and hypocrites,

[1] Comp. *Carm.* xi. 55: *οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ Χριστοῖο καλούμεθα, ἐκ μερόπων δέ.*

"Angry lions to the small, and fawning spaniels to the great." [1]

In point of fact—and so his own instinct told him—he had never been the sort of man to rule the turbulent Church of a pompous capital. The Constantinopolitans looked for magnificence in the bearing and surroundings of their bishop. Men reproached him, he says, because he did not indulge in splendid banquets, nor wear rich robes, nor make stately processions through the city, nor receive those who came to him with haughty condescension. "I was not aware," he says, "that I was expected to enter into competition with consuls, and praefects, and the most illustrious generals, who hardly know how to get rid of their superabundance. I did not know that I ought to have squandered on gluttony and luxury the goods of the poor, and to be drawn by superb horses, and to mount on chariots in ostentatious display, and to be conducted about in state with cries of "Hush," [2] and that every one should make way before us as though we were wild beasts, and part into lanes of spectators, and that our coming should be conspicuous from afar. If these things offended you, they are past. Forgive me this wrong. Is it a grievous thing to be deprived of harangues, and meetings, and assemblies, and these applauses which give us wings, and of friends and honour, and the beauty and spaciousness of the city, and of the lightning which blazes round those who look at these things and do not look within? Not so grievous as to be troubled and starved with the tumults and seethings about me and the condescension to the many! For they

[1] A truly terrific indictment against the bishops of this Œcumenical Council may be drawn from the verses *Ad Episcopos* and *De Episcopis* of this great theologian and canonised saint.

[2] περιποππύζεσθαι. It is difficult to translate Gregory's picturesque and energetic language, *e.g.* καὶ τῶν θυσιαστηρίων κατερεύγεσθαι of the previous clause.

seek, not priests, but rhetoricians; not stewards of souls, but keepers of money; not pure sacrificers, but strong champions. I will make some excuse for them. It is we who have trained them thus; we have become all things to all men, I know not whether that we may save them or destroy them all." [1]

He ends this magnificent oration with the famous apostrophe of farewell to the city, the Church, the people. "Farewell, Anastasia . . . and thou great and venerable temple, and all ye other churches which approach it in splendour and beauty! Farewell, apostles, the leaders of my conflicts! Farewell, my seat as a bishop, thou dangerous and envied throne! Farewell, assemblies of bishops! . . . Farewell, the choir of Nazarites! . . . Modest virgins, grave matrons, crowds of widows and orphans, eyes of the poor always intent upon God and upon us! Farewell, hospitable houses, lovers of Christ, and helpers of my infirmities! Farewell, ye lovers of my sermons, ye crowds that throng to the church, ye shorthand writers open and secret, and these rails so often pressed upon by eager auditors! Farewell, Emperors, with your courts and courtiers, whether faithful to the Emperor or not I cannot tell, but for the most part faithless to God! Clap your hands and with shrill voice cry out, exalt your orator! The busy and insolent tongue (as you account it) has sunk to silence, but shall not be always silent, but shall fight against you with hand and ink. But for the present we are silent. Farewell, oh great and Christ-loving state, for I will witness to the truth even though your zeal be not according to knowledge! My separation has made me more kindly towards you. Come to the truth; change yourselves even though it be late.

[1] *Orat.* xlii. 24.

Honour God more than has been your wont. . . . Farewell, East and West, for whom and by whom we are being opposed! He is my witness who will give you peace, if but a few should imitate my retirement. Those who give up thrones will not also lose God, but will have the seat in heaven which is far loftier and safer than these. Farewell, ye angels who preside over this Church, and over my presence and my departure, if my fortunes be in the hand of God! Farewell, oh Trinity, my meditation and my glory! Mayst Thou both be preserved by these, and mayst Thou preserve these, my people; for mine they are even if we be ruled by others. May it be ever told me that Thou art being exalted and uplifted both in word and in conversation. My children, keep, I pray you, the deposit; remember my stonings. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."[1]

He carried away with him a lasting dislike to ecclesiastical assemblies. "He was tired," he says, "of fighting against envy and venerable bishops, who put their personal squabbles before questions of the faith."[2] He hopes never again to take his seat in any synod of the clergy, for he compares their discussions to the indiscriminate jangling of geese or cranes.[3] He complains that synods frequently meet together but find no remedy for existing evils, and only add troubles to troubles.[4] He desires only to salute conferences from

[1] *Orat.* xlii. 27.

[2] *Ep.* lxxxvi., *Carm.* xii. 333-350. The indictment in this poem is very unsparing.

[3] *Carm.* xvii. 91-94—

Οὐδέ τί που συνόδοισιν ὁμόθρονος ἔσσομ' ἔγωγε
χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἄκριτα μαρναμένων
ἔνθ' ἔρις, ἔνθα μόθος τε καὶ αἴσχεα πολλὰ πάροιθεν
εἰς ἕνα δυσμενέων χῶρον ἀγειρόμενα.

He is ashamed to be one "of these *hucksters of the faith.*"

[4] *Ep.* cxxxvi.

afar, for his experiences of them have been very disagreeable.[1] His view of clerical gatherings was severe but it was shared by St. Martin, who for the last sixteen years of his life avoided all councils and assemblies of bishops; and by Bossuet, who wrote to a friend, "You know what kind of things these assemblies usually are."

He did not linger in Constantinople, but closed his residence there, and the three years of his chief labours, in the summer of 381. The synod chose in his place the Senator Nectarius, a moderately worthy civilian who knew nothing about religion, and had not even been hitherto baptized. He succeeded also to the presidency of the council, and his very inferiority to Gregory probably made it more easy for him to conduct these meetings without unnecessary friction. The subsequent proceedings of the bishops were more creditable. They decided, with reference only to the civil rank of the cities and not the apostolic origin of the Churches, that the Bishop of Constantinople was to be regarded as next in rank to the Pope of Rome. They also agreed to canons in condemnation of Eunomian, Arian, and Apollinarian heresies, and added clauses to the Nicene Creed. These clauses defined doctrines for which Gregory had long laboured by the force of persuasion, and they were mainly carried by the authority of the ablest Eastern theologian — Gregory of Nyssa. The council laid them before the Emperor in a letter dated July 9, 381; on the 19th of the same month; and on later occasions. Theodosius, in consequence, passed his imperial decrees against the heretics whom they had condemned. The Council of Constantinople practically closed for a time the fifty years of struggle which had begun with the Council of Nice.

[1] *Ep.* cxxiv.

While the peace of the Church and the nominal faith of thousands depended on the breath of an Emperor, men were in a constant state of nervous alarm. Nectarius, an unbaptized neophyte who had been elected mainly for his dignified appearance — a man entirely ignorant of theology and more of a civil magistrate than a patriarch—could give Theodosius very little help in his perplexities. The Emperor is even said to have consulted the bishop of the little sect of the Novatians; and, in 383, the orthodox were thrown into consternation by receiving from the good Empress Flaccilla the disquieting news that Theodosius intended to grant an interview to the heretic Eunomius, and even to accept from his hands a written treatise. Who could tell whether the new Constantine might not be perverted from the faith by a new Eusebius? Under these circumstances, Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, threw himself into the post of danger, and the course which he took gives us a characteristic glimpse into the manners and circumstances of the times. Accompanied by other bishops, he went to the palace at some court gathering. Theodosius was on his throne, and his little boy Arcadius, who had recently been invested with the diadem as Augustus, was sitting by his side, and receiving the flattering homage of all the assembled courtiers. Amphilochius saluted the Emperor, but seemed not even to notice the presence of the young Arcadius. "What?" said Theodosius in a tone of ill-temper, "do you not see my son?" "Oh," said the bishop, "I forgot. Good morning, my child," and he accompanied the careless salutation by patting the august child familiarly on the cheek.[1] Theodosius, deeply offended, ordered his guard

[1] Sozomen, vii. 6: προσελθὼν οἷαγε νηπίῳ, χαῖρε τέκνον, ἔφη τῷ δακτύλῳ σαίνων.

to punish this impertinence by turning the bishop out of the room. Then Amphilochius faced him, and said, "You see, Emperor, that you cannot tolerate an indignity to your son, and your anger flames against those who insult him. Doubt not, then, that the God of the universe also abhors those who blaspheme His only begotten Son; and see from thence what is your duty." The incident made a deep impression on the Emperor's mind, and was followed by yet more stringent edicts against all forms of heresy. These were the more easily suppressed because they offered little resistance and called forth no martyrs. The Pagans alone sincerely resisted, and Christians themselves had to blush for the brutality with which these worshippers of the dead Pan were treated by the false zeal of sham monks. Libanius calls them, "men in black, with appetites more voracious than elephants, who knew how to hide their drunkenness under an artificial pallor."[1] The carcases lay there and vultures were gathered together.[2]

[1] Liban. *De templis non exscindendis* (*Opp.* ii. p. 164, ed. Reiske): οἱ δὲ μελανειμονοῦντες οὗτοι καὶ πλείω μὲν τῶν ἐλεφάντων ἐσθίοντες, κ.τ.λ. Comp. Eunap. *Ædes.* p. 78; *Maxim.* 93.

[2] See Zosim. vii. 37; and some good remarks of De Broglie, vi. 90.

XII

Continued

LAST DAYS OF GREGORY

"Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ Χριστοῦ κλήσομαι ἀτρεμέων."—*Carm.* xviii. 162.

SECTION VIII

Gregory retired into a life of solitude and contemplation, but not of uselessness. He still retained a deep interest in the affairs of the Church. To his friend Philagrius, who charged him with rashness and levity in resigning his bishopric,[1] he replied, "I thought it right to turn my prow, as the proverb says, and to act as they say the nautilus does when it observes a coming storm, namely, to draw back into myself, so that I can now see from afar how others are pushed about and push each other about, but, for my own part, to turn my thoughts to the world beyond. You write that it is dangerous to abandon the Church. Which Church? If you mean *my* Church, I agree with you. But when it is a Church which does not properly concern me, and which is not assigned to me, then I am blameless. Am I bound to it because for a time I bore its anxieties? In that case many others would have been bound who

[1] *Ep.* lxxxvii.

have for a time taken charge of strange Churches. Perhaps my toil deserves a reward, but my resignation of it cannot be regarded as a fault."

His garden, and ease, and his little fountain gave him the purest and keenest pleasure, nor did he take it much to heart if the sham monks, in which those bad days abounded, charged him with being a Sybarite because he still retained these very moderate enjoyments.[1]

Gregory relieved the burden of his heart in various poems, which, unless we refuse all credit to his testimony, give us an unhappy impression of the clergy of his day. The severest of these is a poem against the bishops, full of indignant denunciation.[2] There is another on various kinds of life and against false bishops, in which he openly attributes the loss of his see to the envious rejection of his peaceable counsels.[3] It was the character of his mind to brood on the wrongs that he received and the miseries he suffered, though he ever strove to forgive the one and to be resigned to the other.

In his poem against the priests of Constantinople and the city, he says, "Oh, ye priests, who offer bloodless sacrifices, and adorers of the great Unity in the Trinity! Oh laws! Oh emperors who exult in piety! Oh glorious foundation of the great Constantine! Oh younger Rome, who art as far above other cities as the starry heaven is above the earth! I will call on you who are noble. What wrongs hath envy inflicted on me! How has it flung me far from my holy children after having long contended, a light-bearer for heavenly doctrines, and pouring forth a stream from the rock! What justice is it, that trouble and terror should have come on me in the first fashioning of the city in piety,

[1] *Carm.* xliv. 1-4. [2] Id. xiii. [3] Id. xvii.

and that another should rejoice his soul over my toils, uplifted suddenly on another's throne, where God and the good servants of God placed me? An odious disease (discord) did this! The servants of God did it, who, Oh Christ, my King! being in deplorable discord among themselves, are unfriendly to me. For I would not be the bold champion of one party, nor did I wish to place anything before Christ. My fault was that I shared not in the sins of others, and am not carried along like a little vessel by a transport. Hence I am hated by the frivolous, who profanely abandoned this chair to friends whose god is opportunity. May the abyss of oblivion hide these things! but I, leaving all this behind me, will rejoice in my tranquillity, gladly flying from palaces, and cities, and priests, and all such things; as I longed to do of old, when God called me, both in nightly dreams and in dread terrors of the frightful sea. Therefore I fled, exulting, from envy, and after a great storm, I have tied up my bark in a sure haven, where, uplifting my soul with pure thoughts, I will offer the sacrifice of silence, as before of speech. These are the words of Gregory, who stripped off all things for Christ."

He felt a deep relief in his new freedom from the storms of public life. In one of his poems he expresses his thankfulness that he shall never again sit, like a slave, timid and dumb at the feasts of princes; never again have to submit to the small flatteries or small insults of magistrates, or form one of a multitude who were outstretching greedy palms for birthday or wedding gifts. "When one of our common friends," so he writes to Amazonius, "of whom I hope there are many, asks you, Where is Gregory now, and what he is doing? tell him, with perfect confidence, that he is

leading, in all quietude, a philosophic life, and that he troubles himself as little about his opponents as about men of whose very existence one knows nothing."[1] "For this peace," he writes to the statesman Sophronius, "I have to thank my enemies. In them I may see my benefactors. Seeming loss is often real prosperity."[2] Though he had been "cast away by the ungrateful city like a flake of foam or a fragment of seaweed," his relations towards his successor Nectarius were perfectly courteous, and they interchanged friendly letters. But when, in 382, Theodosius invited him to another synod, he declined. "To tell the truth," he writes to Procopius, "I am determined to avoid every assembly of bishops. I have never seen a single instance in which a synod did any good, or which did not do more harm than good. Strife and ambition dominate them (do not think that I express myself too harshly) to an incredible degree."[3] He expresses the same sentiment with equal conviction in many other letters.[4] "From councils and synods," he writes to another friend, "I will keep myself at a distance, for I have experienced that most of them, to speak with moderation, are not worth much."[5] "I will not sit in the seat of synods," he sings, "while geese and cranes confusedly wrangle. Discord is there, and shameful things, hidden before, are gathered into one meeting-place of rivals."[6]

The Church at Nazianzus at this time had begun to be troubled by the Apollinarian heresy, and Gregory, whose one longing was to live retired in his paternal farm at Arianzus, had much trouble in finding a fit person under whom his Church could be placed. The little community was exceedingly unwilling to spare him, old and

[1] *Ep.* xciv. [2] *Ep.* cxxxv. [3] *Ep.* cxxx.
[4] *Ep.* cxxxvi. etc. [5] *Ep.* cxxiv. [6] *Carm.* xvii. 90-94.

worn out as he was. A letter which he wrote to the Praefect Olympius saved the town from the destruction with which he threatened it in consequence of a riot which, Gregory tells him, was only the fault of a few young men.[1] At last, however, he succeeded in procuring the election of the presbyter Eulalius as Bishop of Nazianzus, and in his hands he felt that he could safely leave the care of his people. In telling this fact to Gregory of Nyssa, he says that he is not thereby giving up his bishopric to another, since everybody knows that he was appointed Bishop of Sasima, not of Nazianzus. It is curious that, in another letter,[2] he seems to say the very opposite, for he writes that if he were well enough to act as a bishop anywhere it ought to be at Nazianzus, for he was appointed there, "and *not of Sasima*, as some mistakedly try to persuade you." It is by no means easy to reconcile the two passages. The facts seem to be that Gregory was actually *ordained* Bishop of Sasima at Nazianzus, but that he never really assumed that bishopric, and that his father had appointed him coadjutor-bishop of Nazianzus, where he really had performed episcopal functions.

After the appointment of Eulalius Gregory took little or no part in public life, but lived in ascetic retirement at Arianzus, delighting in his garden with its rivulet and pleasant shade.[3] He wrote some controversial letters about the spread of Apollinarianism, and many genial notes to friends to sympathise with them in their joys and sorrows. Sometimes he felt the burden of his throneless, citiless, childless life,[4] with few to care for him, with no relatives about him, not

[1] *Ep.* cxli. [2] *Ep.* clxxxii.

[3] *Carm.* xliv. Some monk actually charged him with *luxury* on this account (*πρώην τίς με τρυφᾶν διετείνετο*). [4] Id. vii.

knowing where he should be buried or who should close his eyes. He interested himself in the young; he tried to reconcile disputes; he wrote kind letters of introduction for youthful students both to Pagans and to Christians. But even here he was invaded by those petty, every-day troubles of the world which caused him greater worry than more serious calamities. A relative named Valentinian settled near him, and the female members of his family caused him such intense annoyance that, like new Eves, they drove him for a time from his little paradise "as though by viperine incursions."[1]

His poems were the chief amusement of his leisure. He had always been fond of poetry, but had necessarily laid the pursuit aside during the more active occupations of his life. In his poem "to his own Verses" he tells us that he wrote them partly to interest others, partly to occupy his own thoughts, partly to furnish an antidote to heretical songs which, like the *Thalia* of Arius, expressed the views of Arians and other heretics, partly also to supply Christian youths with something to read when they were interdicted from classical literature.[2] These poems are diffuse and digressive. It is very rarely that they rise to enthusiasm, but they have a biographic, historic, and psychological interest, and are frequently graceful in their use of phrases borrowed from the classic poets.

Asceticism had by no means lost its charm for him.[3] Sometimes he retired to a mountain cave, sometimes he walked about without sandals. His dress was of the roughest description, his only bed was sackcloth laid upon the ground.[4] He had nothing to bind him to

[1] *Ep.* cciii. [2] *Carm.* xxxix. [3] *Carmm.* xviii. xix. lix.; *Ep.* cxcvi.

[4] Yet no one is more severe than Gregory on the manifold hypocrisies which were fostered by the general admiration for monks. Many were

earth, and he desired more and more to draw near to heaven. His life reduced itself to a preparation for death. To the last he was struggling against every possible attack of evil passion and fleshly desire which still assaulted him.[1] Among other weaknesses, he felt himself tempted to speak too much and at times too harshly. To cure this tendency, he wisely devoted the whole of one Lent to silence, in order that his tongue might learn once for all what ought and what ought not to be spoken.[2] He had often wavered between the life of ecclesiastical activity and the life of monastic contemplation; but the conflict was now over, and the close of his life fulfilled the ideal of his early manhood. He died at the close of 389, or the beginning of 390, at the age of sixty.[3] Of the exact date or the circumstances of his death we know nothing, but we may be sure that no soul which ever left this earth was more desirous than that of this much tried Father to depart from earth and to enter into the joy of his Lord.[4]

He left everything of which he was possessed to the Church of Nazianzus for the relief of its poor, with the reservation of a few legacies. The little farm at Arianzus, with the brood-mare and the sheep, he leaves to his kinsmen Gregory the deacon and Eustathius the monk. The virgin Rufiana is to have a yearly allowance and two female virgin slaves, who are to be made free if they desire it. His servant Theophilus is to have five

thought angels because they spoke roughly and wore long hair, while they were stained with every crime (*Carm.* xliv. 25-42). There are some very bitter and satirical touches in this poem.

[1] *Carm. de Calamit. suis.* [2] *Carm.* lv.

[3] Jer. *De Virr. illustr.* "Decessit ante hoc ferme triennium sub Theodosio imperatore." This book was written in the fourteenth year of Theodosius.

[4] His bones were translated by Constantine Porphyrogenite to Constantinople, and thence (according to Baronius) to Rome.

gold pieces, as well as his brother Eupraxius, and his secretary Theodosius, all three of whom are to be set free. He can leave nothing to his niece Alypiana (whose two sisters do not deserve a legacy), but her children are to have what remains of Caesarius's wardrobe and horse-trappings and ornaments. His friend and helper, the deacon Evagrius, is to have a frieze coat, a tunic, two cloaks, and thirty gold pieces. There are other small legacies; and the will is signed by six bishops—of whom Amphilochius of Iconium is one—a presbyter, and a notary. The will appears to have been made shortly before his resignation of the see of Constantinople.

His life had been swept in different directions by the ordinance of a Divine providence; but whether as a youth in the home of his parents, or as a student at Athens, or as a monk in Pontus, or as a priest and coadjutor-bishop at Nazianzus, or as Archbishop of Constantinople and President of an Œcumenical Council, he had always been faithful to the holy training which he had received from his earliest childhood. He speaks in one of his orations[1] of the voice of the Divine Shepherd, "which I heard from the Divine oracles; which I was taught by my holy parents; which I taught at every opportunity alike, without suffering myself to be moulded by any opportunity, and I will never cease teaching it. With it I was born and in it I will depart." Many of the Fathers spent all their lives in a struggle against calumny; but calumny, though often active in his defamation, shrank back ashamed before the pure simplicity of the life of Gregory. He was not indeed faultless, or he would not have been human. He was afflicted with a certain irritable sensitiveness.

[1] *Orat.* xxxiii. 15.

There was something clinging and feminine in his nature. He lacked the strong moral fibre of men like Basil and Athanasius. He betrays at times a certain vanity which is a poorer and weaker foible than the haughty sense of superiority which breathes through the writings of Dante and Milton. He carried into active life too strong a desire for rest. He wanted the persistency and battle-brunt which enable men not merely to disdain the meanness of their adversaries, but to confront and conquer it. He yielded too easily. He had little practical knowledge of the world, and became the ready dupe of impostors. But there was nothing ignoble even in his faults. Full of deep love for God and fiery zeal for truth, he was yet charitable and tolerant. If he was quick to take offence, he was also most ready to forgive. His devotion to Basil survived even the deep wrong of the bishopric of Sasima. He devoted his life to the highest ends of study, of self-denial, of usefulness, and desired to lay all that he had and all that he was at the feet of Christ. He was one of those few of whom the grace of God had taken early hold, so that they live lives of virginal purity, and their days from boyhood upwards are "bound each to each by natural piety." It was no small blessing to the Eastern Church in the fourth century that, even during the reigns of Pagan or Arian Emperors, and amid the deep corruption and glaring worldliness of many of its clergy, it could rely on the dauntless vigour of Basil, the theological science of Gregory of Nyssa, and the eloquent orthodoxy and holy life of Gregory of Nazianzus.

His title—The Theologian—would be much more applicable in the modern sense of the word to Gregory

of Nyssa. But it was intended to imply his clear and able exposition of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity and of the Double Nature of Christ, especially in the five famous discourses delivered at Constantinople. As an original thinker, Gregory was far less profound than his younger namesake, but he was so inflexibly devoted to the traditional theology of the Church that Rufinus speaks of orthodoxy as his conspicuous merit. "Any one," he says, "who ventured to differ from Gregory about any article of the faith thereby stamped himself as a heretic." He deserves the high praise given him by De Broglie that we find in him "a concentration of all that is spread through the writings of Hilary, Basil, and Athanasius," and that "in a few pages and a few hours he has summed up and closed the controversy of a whole century."[1] On the Trinity and the Nature of Christ he reflects the final doctrine of the Church, but he adds nothing to its exposition except lucid statement and striking illustrations. It is highly to the credit of his insight that he was one of the few theologians who, between the days of Irenaeus and those of Anselm, rejected that hideous theory of the Atonement which represented the blood of Christ as *a ransom paid to Satan.* In this respect he stands far ahead of his contemporary of Nyssa. "For whom," he asks,[2] "and on what account was the blood, that precious and lordly blood of God, who was at once our High Priest and victim, out-poured for our sake? We were under the power of the Evil One, seeing that we were sold under sin. . . . Since then the ransom is paid to the owner who has the power, I ask to whom was this ransom rendered, and for what cause? Was it to the Evil One himself? Shame on the

[1] De Broglie, *L'Église et l'Empire*, v. 385. [2] *Orat.* xlv. 22.

rash notion! Then would the robber have received as a ransom and an overflowing reward for his tyranny, not only *from* God, but God Himself in Christ?" He proceeds to show that neither is it possible to hold that the ransom was paid to the Father. He regards the Atonement as due to the Divine "oeconomy" for man's salvation. Wherein the exact nature of the oeconomy consisted he does not further explain, because it is incapable of explanation. Like all the wisest teachers, he refrains from idle and absurd *theories* of the Atonement as to its working *towards the mind of God*, while yet he wholly believes in the Atonement as regards its blessed effects for the deliverance of man. He was, however, unable to shake off the deplorable fancy of Origen that the devil was tricked by the Incarnation into a belief that he was dealing only with a man and not with God, though he does not express the thought quite so crudely as was done by some theologians, both patristic and scholastic.[1] Gregory specially distinguished himself by his maintenance of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit at a time when that doctrine was not fully formulated or understood.[2]

As regards the sacraments, he held the current language of his day. He approved and practised the custom of deferring Baptism, and scarcely rises above the hard inference of Augustine, that infants dying unbaptized are not received into blessedness.[3] On the Lord's Supper he speaks in the hyperbolical and metaphorical

[1] *Orat.* xxxix. 13: σαρκὸς προβλήματι δελεάζεται.

[2] *Carm.* cxxiii. 33—

τὸ πνεῦμα ἀκούσαθ', ὡς θεὸς πάλιν λέγω·
ἐμοὶ θεὸς σύ· καὶ τρίτον βοῶ, θεός.

See his very able argument in *Orat.* xxxi. It led to the Arian charge that he was bringing in more gods, see *Carm.* cxlv. 13.

[3] μήτε δοξασθήσεσθαι μήτε κολασθήσεσθαι.

language of rhetoric, but it is not easy to be sure that he regarded the bread and wine as anything more than sacramental signs of the Body and Blood of Christ.[1]

In questions of eschatology he seems more or less to have shared, though with wavering language, in some of those views of Origen, which the Church has partly adopted and partly left uncondemned:—the view, especially, that there shall be hereafter a probatory and purifying fire, and that we may indulge a hope in the possible cessation, for many, if not for all, of the punishments which await sin beyond the grave. He speaks indeed far less openly than Gregory of Nyssa of a belief in the final restoration of all things, but even this belief lies involved in his remarks on the prophecy of St. Paul concerning that day when "God shall be all in all."[2]

Gregory published no formal treatise either on theology or exegesis. To exegesis he has made no important contribution, but he shows a practical good sense which led him to avoid the wild and fanciful extremes into which Origen had misled the science of Scriptural interpretation.[3] He is not of course to be compared to the great exegetes, either of the Antiochene or of the Alexandrian schools. His references to Scripture are

[1] He calls them *ἀντίτυπα τοῦ τιμίου σώματος ἢ τοῦ αἵματος* (*Orat.* ii. 95), and it is idle to say with Elias Cretensis that *ἀντίτυπον = ἰσότυπον*, or with John Damascene that he only calls them so before consecration. These are subterfuges of ecclesiastical bias. See Ullmann, p. 339.

[2] See his remarks on 1 Cor. xv. 28 in his *Orat.* xxx. 6. The most remarkable passage is in *Orat.* xl. 36, where, after speaking of the purifying fire (*πῦρ καθαρτήριον*), and of a fire which does not purify but punishes, and is eternal (*διαιώνιζον*) for the wicked, he adds that "this fire has a destroying force, *unless any one prefers, even in this instance, to adopt a more humane view of it, and worthily of Him who punishes*" (*εἰ μή τῳ φίλον κἀνταῦθα νοεῖν τοῦτο φιλανθρωπότερον καὶ τοῦ κολάζοντος ἐπαξίως*).

[3] His views are given most definitely in *Orat.* xlv. 12. On the whole subject I must refer to my Bampton Lectures *On the History of Interpretation*, pp. 219 ff.

mainly incidental, practical, or controversial. He has not attempted such work as was done by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Chrysostom, and Theodoret in educing the grammatical, contextual, historical sense of Scripture, and though, as an Origenist, he thought that by allegory we could rise above the letter to the spirit,[1] he has never flung over Scripture the rich imaginative light which it caught in the hands of men like Origen and Augustine. Jerome boasted of being his pupil, but as a Scriptural expositor the pupil far surpassed the master.

On the other hand, Gregory stands very high as a practical moralist, and all his teaching is pervaded by the truth that right conduct leads to true knowledge—πρᾶξις ἐπίβασις θεωρίας. He did his utmost to secure unity and peace. He hated the vain janglings of heated partisanship, and earnestly advised the fuglemen of religious opinions "not to be wiser than is right, not to be more legal than the law, nor more luminous than the light, nor more orthodox than orthodoxy, nor higher than the Divine command; but to be earnest, to avoid extremes, and to take Nature and Reason for their guides." In another place he says that "the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, without which no Christian can subsist, are the Law, the Prophets, the Testaments, Mercy, Education, the Sufferings of Christ, the New Birth, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the gift of the Holy Spirit, Faith, Hope, Love, Illumination; and lastly, and most important of all, the Knowledge of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This is the most essential. It is a beautiful trait in his character that while he hated heresy he was tolerant to heretics.

Gregory's works consist entirely of poems, letters, and orations. Of his poems we have already spoken.

[1] *Orat.* xxxvii. 2, comp. xliii. 67.

They may be roughly divided into dogmatic, moral, autobiographic, and historical. One hundred and twenty-nine are epitaphs, and there are ninety-four epigrams. The tragedy *Christus Patiens* is probably not by him. None of Gregory's poems are in any way comparable to those of the Greek epic and tragic writers, of whose phrases they are almost a cento. But as religious meditations they have a certain austere charm from the melancholy individuality with which they are impressed. As an expression of sorrowful mysticism, as the reveries of Christian self-introspection, as effecting the new thoughts, griefs, and aspirations which the new faith had introduced into the old world, they entitle Gregory to the honour of being the poet of Oriental Christianity. Reflective, emotional, yet tranquil, differing in the very basis of their thoughts from the poems of Paganism, they present us with a new phenomenon in literature. They have none of the brilliant fascination caused by perfect art and exquisite harmony, but they are the confessions of a beautiful spirit, the sighs of a holy soul which can find no satisfaction save in its God. He who would measure the immense abyss which lies between the grace and sensualism of the old world, even in its more innocent delights, and the mystic passion of the children of the Christian dispensation, should read and compare the exquisite epode of Horace—

"Beatus ille qui procul negotiis"—

with the ideal of happiness presented by Gregory in his poem (Ὀλβιον ὅστις ἔρημον ἔχει βίον) on the beatitude of a solitary life.[1]

[1] *Carm.* xvii. See some eloquent and discriminating criticism of Gregory's poems in Villemain, *Tableau de l'eloquence chrétienne*, pp. 133-143.

We may give one specimen of a few verses from a poem to himself, beautifully translated by the authoress of *The voice of Christian Life in Song*—

"Where are the winged accents? Lost in air.
Where the fresh flower of youth and glory? Gone.
The strength of well-knit limbs? Brought low by care.
Wealth? Plundered. Nothing left but God alone.
Where those dear parents who my life first gave?
My mother, sister? Silent in the grave.

"Not e'en my fatherland to me is left;
The hostile billows sweep my country o'er;
And now, with tottering steps, of all bereft,
Exiled and homeless, weak and sad, and poor,
No child my age to soothe with service sweet,
I wander day by day with weary feet."

Then, after vain surmise as to his end, and what shall become of his mortal dust, he expresses his resignation to God's will, and ends—

"But Thou, Oh Christ, art fatherland to me,
Strength, wealth, repose, yea all I find in Thee!"

Gregory's letters have the charm which we find in so many of the letters of this century, because more than any form of literature, they give us an insight into the heart of the writer, and the times in which he lived. They are for the most part written in a beautiful style, and in accordance with a theory which he himself explains, that letters should not be wearisomely long nor carelessly brief, nor pompously elaborate, but clear and to the point.[1] That Gregory attached some value to those which are still extant is shown by the fact that he himself published them at the request of his young friend Nicobulus.[2] The 236th letter is merely a note written to introduce a youth to Libanius. It was written at the desire of a mother, who wished for

[1] See *Epp.* li. liv. [2] *Ep.* lii.

her boy the advantage of so distinguished a friend. Could anything have been more admirably suited to its purpose than these three lines—

> "I, a mother, have sent my son to you as a father; the natural mother to the father of eloquence. Care for him as I do."

Gregory would, no doubt, have rested his fame upon his orations, which furnish the ripest fruits of his long training and faithful labours. During the greater part of his life he had studied rhetoric as an art, and although his voice was somewhat weak and his pronunciation a little provincial, he was reckoned among the greatest orators of his age. His orations—of which one only is a homily[1]—are forty-five in number. Five are on moral subjects, one of them being on love to the poor, and the others on the necessity for peace and moderation in religious differences. Six are festival sermons; nine are controversial, and of these five are the famous discourses on the doctrine of the Trinity.[2] Four are funeral sermons on his father, Caesarius, Gorgonia, and Basil; four are eulogies on Athanasius, Cyprian, the "philosopher" Maximus, and the Maccabees. The remaining sixteen are occasional sermons—inaugural, farewell, apologetic, and consolatory. They are very carefully written in a pure and noble Greek style, and they abound in eloquent passages. The finest of them are the oration on behalf of the Nazianzenes, the farewell sermon at Constantinople, and the funeral sermon on Basil, though in the latter, as in his other eulogies, he lacks distinctness, and leaves us with the impression that he is praising ideals and not men. The faults of these sermons, as judged by a modern standard, are that they are too prolific and digressive, too exaggerative in their

[1] *On Matt. xix.* 1. [2] *Orat.* xxvii.-xxxi.

expressions, and that they want more system in the arrangement of the matter. But whatever may be their defects, their moral teaching is of the purest and loftiest kind, and they are only surpassed by the sermons of Augustine, of Chrysostom, and of Basil.[1] Basil uses words as a weapon, Gregory more often as an ornament. Basil is more of an orator, Gregory more of a poet and a rhetorician.[2]

Gregory of Nazianzus is scarcely ever represented separately in Western art, but he occurs as one of the Four Greek Fathers in Byzantine art.

[1] Benoît's eulogy—that they combine "the invincible logic of Bourdaloue; the unction, colour, and harmony of Massillon; the flexibility, poetic grace, and vivacity of Fénelon; the force, grandeur, and sublimity of Bossuet" (*Grégoire*, p. 721)—will sound exaggerated to most readers.

[2] De Broglie, v. 191.

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